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Near East & South Asia

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ALGERIA

Trade Unions Issue Declaration on Economic Reform

91AA0061B Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French
26 Sep 90 p 13

[Text] In a joint declaration, the National Federation of Public Sector Managers' Associations (FNAG), the National Confederation of Public Operators (CNOP), and the Algerian General Economic Confederation (CGEA) analyzed the socioeconomic situation prevailing in the country. The following is a summary of their analysis.

The representatives of the FNAG, CNOP, and CGEA met on 15 September 1990 for the purpose of analyzing the socioeconomic situation in the country and establishing the necessary agreement on an organized and lasting basis.

At the conclusion of this first meeting, they decided to make public the following joint declaration.

"The supplementary finance law for 1990 was adopted under distressing conditions.

This law, which will have uncertain socioeconomic consequences, was unfortunately conceived within a rigid and narrow framework, in the absence of any dialogue with the qualified representatives of the economic operators, who are experiencing serious problems of which the pertinent authorities have been duly informed.

These problems, which are growing in scope and complexity, constitute a source of keen concern, which does not justify optimism.

The three federations are persuaded that the theory proposed by the government, in flagrant contradiction with the program set forth by the prime minister at the time of his investiture by the People's National Assembly, has deviated to a great extent from the spirit and the letter of the economic reform conceived and implemented by the management cadres in our country. It will be ineffective in resolving the current problems, in relation in particular to:

- The blockage of the installed productive capacity;
- The crushing weight of the tax and parafiscal burden;
- The inadequacy, if not the absence, of supplies and the purchase of means of production;
- The impossibility of rehabilitating seriously outdated and obsolete equipment and installations;
- The rise in relative prices;
- The legalized informal market, and the savage access allowed foreign capital; and
- The replacement of the Algerian dinar, an expression of our national sovereignty, with foreign currency on the domestic market level.

This policy of plunging forward is being further aggravated by:

- Legislation and regulations that are often outdated and are not adapted to the realities resulting from the 23 February 1989 Constitution, which was approved by the votes of the overwhelming majority of the Algerian people;
- Foreign trade and distribution practices that violate the principle of openness and honesty;
- A banking system that pursues a policy of restricting financial resources prior to the reorganization of the EPE [public business enterprises] in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the economic reform;
- An ill-considered search for foreign capital without complementary measures to strengthen the domestic economy and production;
- The increase in the burden of expenses on enterprises, to the detriment of productive investment;
- The aggravation of the budget deficit, which exceeds 5 billion dinars, in contradiction with the assurances that the excess liquid assets in circulation would be reduced; and
- The uncontrolled rise in prices and the poverty that are involving us in an inflationary spiral.

In view of the continued deterioration of the socioeconomic situation and the production tools, the confusion among the operators forced to halt their activities and to shut down temporarily, and the protest movements noted here and there, it falls to the heads of enterprises and small-scale producers, and the FNAG, CNOP, and CGEA, who basically want for themselves the ability to make proposals and serve as active agents in the social partnership, to shoulder heavy responsibilities.

The development of a policy of plunging forward with the organization of a market economy predisposes the country to socioeconomic deviations about which it is the duty of the operators to issue a warning, in order to safeguard the production tools, ensure growth, influence employment positively, and demystify the virtues ascribed to the commercial sales sector in terms of ability to resolve the issues of national development in this pre-electoral period.

In fact, such a policy contributes only to the legalization of the informal economy, thus leading to a gradual shrinkage in productive activities, reduced investments, increased pockets of unemployment, and impoverishment, which only benefit foreign capital.

While the seriousness of the crisis is not unrelated to the grave problems of the moment, the fact nonetheless remains that the search for solutions is consistently taking place within a closed sector from which dialogue and the agreement for which the president of the Republic has repeatedly appealed are excluded.

The truth is that the national interests, just like Algeria's independence of foreign pressures in making decisions, or social justice, are incompatible with information provided after the fact to the competent authorities in the aftermath of laws that have already been approved or promulgated.

As a result, it is imperative and urgent that the rules of the game resulting from the reforms launched by the president of the Republic be respected by the government, in order to blaze a path toward social dialogue in a search for a consensus that will incorporate the expression of differences.

With this in view, the FNAG, CNOP, and CGEA are persuaded of the absolute need for an evaluation of the status of the implementation of the reforms, which they initially endorsed without reservations, but that are currently characterized by flagrant deviations.

They are also convinced that this same scenario, that is to say the exclusion of the economic operators and the social partners, is likely to recur in connection with the 1991 finance law.

This evaluation will make it possible to identify the priority problems and to formulate realistic solutions, with a view to an organized agreement, in relation to:

- The maintenance and functioning of the production tools;
- The relaunching of productive investments in Algeria;
- The management and consolidation of the national economy and production; and
- The redrafting of the legislative and regulatory texts (taxation, Commercial Code, Market Code) consistent with the spirit and the letter of the economic reform.

There can be no doubt that this approach will make it possible to put forth an individual and collective effort in the process of eliminating any operations designed for diversion.

Heeding their members, and attentive to the socioeconomic problems of the country, the FNAG, CNOP, and CGEA will make every effort along these lines in order to make a contribution to promoting social justice and the inseparable interests of the country and the economic operators.

For the CNOP—M. Mekideche, president

For the FNAG—R. Guita, president

For the CGEA—L. Khodja, president“

Commerce Official on Economic Reform

91AA0061A Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French
2 Oct 90 pp 4-5

[Interview with Minister Delegate for Trade Organization Smail Goumeziene by an unidentified APS [Algerian Press Service] reporter; date and place not given; first paragraph is EL MOUDJAHID introduction]

[Text] The reorganization of trade operations in the wake of the economic forms in the process of being achieved means the rehabilitation pure and simple of the

law of the market, through the elimination of monopolies and the reestablishment of competition, without sacrificing either the overall national economic balances or social justice.

This was the essence of the information contained in the interview Minister Delegate for Trade Organization Smail Goumeziene granted to the APS.

[APS] The Algerian transition to a market economy naturally involves the total reorganization of the mechanisms on the basis of which trade, both domestic and foreign, functions. Mr. Minister, what are the principal changes we can expect in this sector?

[Goumeziene] In this transition to a market economy, the changes effected through the implementation of the laws approved by the People's National Assembly (APN) are reflected in the total transfer of responsibility for their trade activities to public and private economic operators. The laws organize this freedom for business initiative, providing that it must be developed outside any monopolistic situation and free of any violation of central or local administrative injunctions, and they provide for control and for penalties when the rules are not respected. State regulation of the market, for its part, is implemented through the collection of taxes and customs duties, the allocation of credit, and the establishment of price guarantees and ceilings, or in other words, through the use of economic and nonadministrative tools.

Thus economic democracy goes along with political democracy. Both imply freedom of action within respect for the law and respect for others.

To be still more specific, I should say that the changes are reflected in the fact that there are no longer any compulsory transfers in domestic and foreign trade, and there are no more legal, factual, or clandestine monopolies. Thus competition is organized on an open and straightforward basis, with respect for the laws and regulations of the republic. Efficiency and performance in costs and services alone will make the difference among the operators. Given this prospect, it is clear that businesses must rapidly adapt to this new situation and develop strategies for winning markets. This presumes the reorganization of trade circuits and the development of new activities both upstream and downstream of production, accompanied by continuing concern with greater profitability and efficiency.

In this transition to a market economy, it is also a question of ensuring the disappearance of the managed market, that is to say the market that allows a given authority to impose quotas or influence as criteria for the distribution of housing, vehicles, machines, construction materials, and electrical household appliances, as well as the black market, which is, in fact, nothing but the other face of the managed market riding on the back of the national productive sector. What is true of the domestic market is, of course, true for our country's foreign markets, as well.

[APS] We know that the major goal of the economic reforms is to destroy the monopolies and to reestablish fair competition. Do you think that the measures and the legal texts already put into effect for the trade sector have made possible a significant advance toward achieving what one can unhesitatingly call a veritable revolution in Algerian trade practices?

[Goumeziene] The complex of laws and regulations already published more than suffices to destroy the monopolies and to establish the conditions for healthy competition. There remains a basic text [word or words missing from text], the Commercial Code, in order to complete the provisions. This will be submitted to the APN during the current session.

It is a question here, in fact, of a revolution in trade practices that will enable the Algerian operators to enter full force into the world market as real negotiators capable of carrying out trade transactions in the interests of their enterprises and the national economy; capable of fitting into the world distribution networks in dynamic fashion, with mastery of modern purchasing and sales techniques (this is why many cadres must be trained in these techniques); capable of influencing the world prices of certain products of which we are major producers, if not major purchasers; and capable of competing or associating with the world market leaders, depending on the enterprise interests.

Our ambition, the goal of our enterprises, is therefore not to open banks or any great bazaar, but to organize a veritable market economy regulated as a function of the basic goals of national development, in particular in the realm of social justice.

[APS] Specifically, how will the new organization of trade be expressed in terms of the current consumer market and that for equipment goods, above all from the point of view of availability?

[Goumeziene] The new trade organization, as we have just explained, seeks to place responsibility on the producers and distributors, but it is also designed to achieve greater fairness and fluidity in providing supplies—to the economic operators, of course, but to the citizens, as well.

If both the quantity and quality of supplies are to be improved, it is necessary, of course, to have a larger and more diversified offering of products, and the expansion of domestic consumption inevitably requires the expansion of national production. Thus, in order to produce more than in recent years, it is necessary:

- That production be profitable, which has not been the case, because prices have been blocked for more than a decade for a number of products, in particular in the public sector, which is the reason for the liberation of certain prices; and
- That there be adequate raw materials and replacement parts, which has not been possible because of the decline in export income. This is the reason for

the search for new financing, which was made difficult by the burden of the debt and the cost of financing obtained on the basis of short-term credit.

With the reform, it is thus a question of unblocking the national production apparatus on four basic levels:

- On the level of its organization, by effecting a transition, as we have said, from a managed monopoly situation to a competitive situation with economic regulation, in which the merchants alone engage in trade;
- On the level of prices, by allowing the apparatus to produce in order to make profits, when its costs are objective, rather than having deficits, as was the case for many years;
- On the level of supplies of raw materials and spare parts, by replacing the AGI [General Import Authorization] system with the financing plan, under the legal control of the Bank of Algeria, and by replacing the system of imports without payment, which had numerous injurious effects (underinvoicing, illegal resales, black market activities [trabendo]), with a system of wholesale distributors also under the control of the Bank of Algeria, since it is that entity that will establish the conditions for authorization and installation. All of this, of course, pending unification of the supply system, when the dinar will, in fact, be standardized;
- On the level of financing conditions for the supply, by clearly separating commercial responsibility, which is borne by the operators, from financing responsibility, which is borne by the banks and the Bank of Algeria. It is a question here of disciplining our progress so as to effect a major reduction in the surcharges imposed by foreign banks on the financing for our imports and to reduce recourse to short-term credit steadily.

This unblocking of the national productive system thus relies both on the imports based on the financing plan established by the Bank of Algeria, with priority, naturally, for projects of strategic importance for the functioning of the production apparatus and for popular consumption, and on the supplementary imports that the domestic (public and private) and foreign wholesale distributors will effect unrelated to the financing plans of the Bank of Algeria, but under the conditions established in the authorizations which will be issued.

[APS] The rehabilitation of the wholesale distribution and concessionary function, while it seems necessary, given the current state of the national economy, is creating a series of concerns, both among the operators and investors, who are faced with an ever more burdensome shortage of resources, and the citizen consumers, who foresee an intolerable reduction in their purchasing power and the frustrations resulting therefrom. To what extent can one say that these fears do or do not have a real basis, Mr. Minister?

[Goumeziene] There is no basis for these worries. With a few rare exceptions, the products the wholesale distributors are authorized to import are destined for the

production apparatus. When one reads the list of products set forth in Circular 63 dated 20 August 1990, one sees "equipment, machinery, tools, spare parts, and accessories" for each activity. The finished products that are authorized are basically products for which there either is no domestic supply (this is the case for vehicles), or one which is vastly inadequate.

The concerns are not well-founded, furthermore, because consistency in the import sector is guaranteed by a single body, the Bank of Algeria, which issues the authorizations and controls the flow through the financing plans and the foreign exchange accounts established with the other banks in Algeria. This is a basic element in the mastery of the development of the dinar.

And the concerns are not justified because the imports effected through the financing plans will enjoy improved conditions, because of the dismantling of the domestic and foreign monopolies, and because the imports made through wholesale distributors will also benefit from better conditions than the "imports without payment" (better prices, guarantees, post-sale services).

And finally, the worry that the system might be wholly taken over by foreign businesses is not justified. All of the domestic enterprises, both public and private, can, of course, organize in order to take their place in this apparatus alone or in association with Algerian enterprises or foreign partners. This is, moreover, what a number of domestic production enterprises plan to do, like the farm operators who have already organized unions in order to import their own supplies.

However, I understand that a certain concern would be felt by those enterprises accustomed to the reassurance of obligatory subjection to administrative protection. Fortunately, there are few of these, and the majority of the enterprises have adequate cadres in a position to hold their own in this competition. It is also necessary that everyone today understand that the citizen no longer wants to be the hostage of the monopolies, of poverty, of the "maarif" [translation unknown] and its corollary, the "hogra," [translation unknown] of influence, of the single product, of poor quality. The citizen today wants to be respected, to choose and to make purchases as a function of his purchasing power, which has not been possible in the past. Previously, when an individual wanted a given product, he not only needed to have enough money to buy it, but also and first of all, he had to be a part of an administered or relational distribution circuit. Today we want the only prerequisite for access to the market to be the purchasing power of the enterprise or the citizen. The veritable trade revolution means this, as well. The problem of the level of purchasing power, naturally, is basic to this approach, and this is why it must again become a major element in the democratic negotiations and the social partnership among the enterprises. The purchasing power of the workers is basically linked to the purchasing power of

their enterprises, under the general conditions of regulation put into effect by the state, in the realm of protection for the least favored social categories in particular, of course. Once again, it must be remembered that the dynamic link between wages and profits is the sole real weapon against unearned income and speculation, and thus against inflation.

Finally, it must be realized that numerous useful activities in which there was a lack of access to foreign supplies except through the reductive filters of the administrative decisions made by the monopolies will be able to benefit from the quality of trade service which is guaranteed, from every point of view, by the new provisions.

Because of all of these factors, the new foreign trade mechanism is expected to produce a decline, rather than acceleration, in inflation. A detailed analysis of the inflationary processes in the past few years in this connection would merit a separate interview.

[APS] And what about the social cost of this situation, which is an entirely new one for the ordinary citizens of Algeria, especially with regard to guaranteed employment, or simply employment?

[Goumeziane] There is no employment problem on this level. On the contrary, as I have told you, economic recovery involves providing the national productive apparatus with better supplies of equipment, spare parts, and semiprocessed products in order to prevent breakdowns, prolonged stoppages, and the underutilization of capacity. For this reason we say that it is necessary to rely on the existing potential for better use of the Bank of Algeria financing plans, but also on the financing potential of operators who have foreign exchange accounts, when those in the Bank of Algeria do not suffice.

With this system, which calls for openness on all levels of potential, the 2,000 combines and 15,000 tractors that have broken down will be able to operate, the 40 percent of the buses that are not in service will be able to run again, the public works equipment will be able to resume operations at the worksites, and the bakers and other producers will be able to work without fear of having to shut down because a small spare part is not available. Now, with what do these activities have to do? They have to do with supplying the population with agricultural and industrial products and housing, as well as its transport facilities.

This is indeed a question of the dynamics for getting production and employment moving again. Today we have rallied together all of the conditions needed so that hundreds of industrial and processing projects can be set in motion as of the end of this year. These are all projects that correspond to the local production of goods that are being imported today. It was the old monopoly system that made more use of foreign sources than the domestic economy.

[APS] As everyone knows, the law on prices provided for a gradual process of liberation that has benefited those

enterprises that previously had deficits. Now, if the price liberalization were generalized, it would penalize broad sectors of agricultural or industrial production, but also and above all, the least favored strata of the population. Has some sort of "safeguard" measure been planned in this connection, Mr. Minister?

[Goumeziane] It is necessary, first of all, to establish why the enterprises showed deficits. It is true that enterprise management has not been efficient, that the costs have often exceeded the generally accepted norms. But above all, it is true that since 1974, the small flame in the national productive sector has been snuffed out by systematic price blockage. This has led to the deficits of which you speak, and then to mass recourse to bank credit, with spiralling agios [translation unknown] and interest rates. Who profited from these deficits? On the one hand, the speculative informal market, which purchased the products of the national productive sector at low prices for the purpose of reselling them on the black market, and on the other hand, the foreign and domestic monopolies which could supply the country with products to take the place of the blocked national production.

And I am not speaking of the blockage of bureaucratic investments. This has been discussed at great length during the various conferences on development that have been held.

You know what the result of all this has been: 40 to 50 billion dinars in the speculative networks, while the production enterprises have obtained credit that in some cases came to as much as 6 billion dinars (the former SONACOME [National Mechanical Engineering Company] group is an example).

We reached a point at which the producers of trucks or tractors had incurred tremendous deficits, while on the contrary, the buyers, for their part (remember the bonds, the derogations), were becoming richer from simple speculative operations.

Thus, defending the national productive sector, both public and private, is not just a desire, but a concrete policy that allows each participant, on his own decision-making level, to make it perform better and more efficiently both in terms of organization and price and supply, with productivity on a competitive basis and the inherited monopoly situation eliminated.

In order to succeed, enterprises must be competitive, rather than building protective administrative or other walls around themselves. Once again, it is through its purchasing power that business can develop and grow.

Also, what you call price liberalization is very simply the opportunity provided by the law to the producers to sell at their real objective cost, taking the existing domestic and international competition into account, and to obtain a normal profit. It is in this connection that the new system of margins gives priority to production as opposed to distribution margins.

Thanks to this, the public industrial enterprises have been able to "recover" nearly 10 billion dinars this year. This has enabled them to reduce, or even to eliminate, their deficits and to face the future with less concern and with greater credibility in the eyes of their banks and their stockholders (stock funds).

Where strategic projects are concerned, the prices guaranteed to the farmers have definitely been improved, with no change in consumer prices, thanks to the Compensation Fund. Thus there are 17 billion dinars making it possible to support the prices of strategic products and goods of first necessity.

However, the system is not sufficiently protective of the neglected strata, because it covers products that are utilized by the entire population, investors as well as merchants and consumers.

It is necessary to improve the system rapidly and to provide further protection for the least favored social strata, while at the same time allowing the national productive sector to develop with new profitability, and thus with its own mastery of the development of its prices.

All of the social partners involved should immediately devote some thought to this issue. In any case, that is my dearest wish, because what concerns me is both the profitability of our national productive sector and the effective protection of the least favored social categories. A profitable economy and social justice go together. It is not possible to ensure social justice when one has produced nothing and thus has nothing to distribute except promises. That I cannot do, for it would be demagogic.

I therefore fail to understand the concerns of certain national producers. It seems to me that there is either poor information about the apparatus that has been put in place, which is probable, or a lack of understanding, which is also probable (this is why I plan to organize a program of studies on this subject in the near future). Or there may be excellent understanding and unreasonable interests, which is equally possible, and this is normal when an attack is made on the cancer of unearned income.

[APS] With the imminent disappearance of the merchant state, do you not think that there is a risk of anarchy in the foreign transactions involving products that we will indeed have to continue to import? If not, what plans are there for supervision or surveillance of both the foreign markets and partners?

[Goumeziane] The merchant state no longer exists. It is today the owner of the company capital of the public economic enterprises, and in this capacity, it manages their capital through the stock funds, which themselves control the situation in these enterprises through the general stockholders' meetings.

Also, the enterprises are autonomous and they engage in trade, but their boards of directors are under the sovereign control of the general stockholders' meetings. This does indeed mean, then, that the enterprises must compete, and well-organized and supervised competition does not lead to anarchy. Apart from this control by the general stockholders' meetings where the public enterprises are concerned, there is a more basic mechanism. That is the supervision by the Bank of Algeria, as well as the oversight by the foreign trade bodies, and the national customs authorities.

[APS] Do you have a last word to say to the public about the great transformations that are going to alter its environment and daily life?

[Goumeziene] I would simply add that our government has undertaken a commitment to carry through the economic and political reforms desired by the people, not for the pleasure of it, but because this is the only way to put the crisis behind us.

Today, international and domestic connections are particularly favorable to the acceleration of these reforms, and thus a speedier solution to the crisis. This presumes, then, a still further domestic and foreign corrective effort. To seek to delay the reforms, or to slow the reorganization effort, would mean taking the risk of failing to find these favorable conditions again for a long time, and probably, plunging into a more profound crisis. And that, I believe, the people do not want, although it would truly serve the purposes of those who live on unearned income and the other demagogues.

Correspondent Examines FFS Leader's Political Efforts

91P40051A Paris LE MONDE in French 26 Nov 90 p 5

[Article by Georges Marion]

[Text] The Front of Socialist Forces (FFS), directed by Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed, held its national convention in Tipasa on Thursday and Friday, 22 and 23 November, in order to formulate its platform. A future congress, to be held in January, should ratify it and elect its directing bodies. This FFS convention is the first to take place in Algeria since 1963 when Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella, then president of the republic, prohibited the party.

Mr. Ait Ahmed is wavering. He directs one of the three principal political parties and is burning to assert his presence in the political field, but he is ever fearful of being caught up in violence that would jeopardize his country's faltering advances towards democracy. When overzealous militants of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in Bou-Ismaïl, a small commune near Tipasa, broke into the offices of a cultural association near his party's offices, throwing members and equipment into the street, Mr. Ait Ahmed immediately sent a protest telegram to Mr. Abassi Madani. But he has refrained from having his own militants retake the offices although they would have the power and the right to do so.

Hampered by his prudence, he is waiting for President Chadli to announce the date of the elections. According to Ait Ahmed, the elections will finally give to power that legitimacy that "constitutes the basis of the free state." "How can one prepare for a campaign when one knows neither the time nor the rules nor the location of the future elections?" he asks. The president recently confirmed that the legislative elections will take place during the first quarter of 1991. Will the voting be on a majority or a proportional basis? How will the electoral districts be arranged? No one knows.

Mr. Ait Ahmed has a right to protest. He finds the situation "surrealist" and recalls that the official results of the last municipal elections have still not been published. "We have the right to vote but not the right to know the results!" he observes with irony. Yet, like the other party leaders, he is patient, leaving the choice of the political field and the initiative of the moment to the president. "I will ask to see him," he says. His determination will be limited to this courteous request for a visit, in spite of the criticisms he aims at this "democracy of privilege."

The situation is paradoxical. The FFS, which has called incessantly for the holding of democratic elections, cannot say publicly that it would prefer that the voters go to the polls at the latest possible date. Everyone realizes that only the FIS is ready to take up the challenge.

Thus it was to fill in the contours of a political platform that several hundred FFS supporters got together. At a time when the market economy is the only acceptable idea, the FFS, in reaffirming its socialist choices, prefers to keep its ideas quiet. After 28 years of authoritarian and bureaucratic socialism, the word does not have a good reputation. Yet Mr. Ait Ahmed remains attached to it. "I have never identified with military or traditional socialism," he says, before painting the picture of a "world that is a village today." The Gulf crisis and the Palestinian problem are two examples of those situations in which tensions are in danger of rebounding from one location to another. "We fear that, in this affair, the aspiration of the Arab masses for democracy will be overshadowed."

The man has charisma and his supporters greet him by standing when he enters the meeting room. But the message of his party remains at times too vague not to raise questions, even within the ranks of the FFS, as to its effectiveness.

EGYPT

Former Defense Minister Comments on Gulf Solution

91AA0050A Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 10 Oct 90 p 3

[Editorial by General Muhammad Fawzi: "The Arabization of the Gulf Crisis"]

[Text] The whole world unanimously agrees that Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait as a basic condition for

opening the door for direct negotiations to achieve a peaceful solution that would realize Iraqi legitimate demands and simultaneously safeguard the sovereignty of Kuwait.

Since it has retreated politically and militarily on the eastern front to focus its military efforts on the main American front in the south, and given the mistrust, collusion, deceit, and hostility generated before the gulf crisis between the Iraqi people and the American administration and its visible and invisible establishments, Iraq will never withdraw under American pressure.

Iraq is trying to resist international pressure brought to bear by universal economic sanctions and the land, sea, and air blockade engineered and effectuated against Iraq and its armed forces through American influence and domination over the Security Council. But, for the second time in 10 years, Iraq has proven itself to be a full-blooded and tough nation able to endure much and to sustain its military and economic capabilities, even if it means living on good precious dates alone to realize its pan-Arab and national goals and to save the Arab being from ruin at the hands of the American colonialist in the region.

By gauging the ability and steadfastness of the Iraqi people behind their leader Saddam Husayn, America is aware of the strength and capabilities of the Iraqi armed forces and their fierceness on the battlefield, in the city of Kuwait and its environs in particular. It also appreciates the magnitude and extent of human and material losses it and its Western and Arab allies would sustain and the impact the aftermath of the war the destruction of gulf and Saudi wells would have on the world economy for a long time to come.

America is willing to mobilize its troops and amass and deploy the troops of its Western allies, France, and England, as well as to raise the number of Arab troops from Egypt, Syria, and Morocco, all for the sake of gaining a three-to-one human advantage over Iraqi troops in the Kuwaiti axis alone. So, if we presume, for the sake of argument, that a direct confrontation, as perceived by the Americans, should break out in the wake of offensive operations planned by the American field command against the Kuwaiti sector with a view to liberating it, the following questions beg for an answer:

Who will commission the allied troops taking part in the Saudi and gulf theater of operations?

Will the French and British, primarily commissioned to defend Saudi Arabia only, be commissioned to liberate Kuwait? Will Arab troops, whose participation is nominal and who have been stationed in the theater to provide a political umbrella for the American presence—and their declared primary function is to defend the holy sites in Saudi Arabia—be commissioned? These are pressing questions the American political and military command ought to determine before getting caught in the mine fields of Kuwait. In accordance with these facts, the American troops are the only side gung ho about

fulfilling its duty, be it through amphibious landings, air drops, or direct confrontation on open desert terrain. I leave the answer to who will fulfill such a duty to the American people, who are haunted by the ghost of Vietnam and their projected losses, estimated at over 30,000 lives. Do the obligations and preparations for American congressional and presidential elections sanction such an action? The United States and the Soviet Union both have a sound appreciation for the disadvantages of a Third World battle arising from the gulf crisis. They want to avoid going through with the battle of destiny in any way, including the use of strategic deceit and psychological-warfare tactics for as long as possible.

To be sure, such tactics include Security Council actions against Iraq and the fortitude of the Iraqi people and leadership in resisting them. Thus, it is our conclusion that it is in the interest of the world not to allow the gulf crisis to lead to a battle.

So what is the solution after two months of worry, trouble, and the war of nerves inflicted on the people of the Arab region in particular? My personal viewpoint is to Arabize the gulf crisis, in the sense of recalling Arab elements, resolutely and with a measure of pro forma solidarity, to plunge into the gulf crisis for the third and, I hope, last time in accordance with the following steps:

1. Arab leaders would meet under the Arab League banner to save the Arab being from ruin after declaring the purpose of the meeting (a peaceful solution to the gulf crisis put forth by the Arabs).

2. Implementation of the Security Council resolutions passed against Iraq that will pledge to withdraw its troops from Kuwait, after receiving written guarantees signed by President Bush and King Fahd, and a guarantee to restore to Kuwait its legitimate rights.

3. Joint Arab forces from pro-Iraqi Arab countries, including the PLO, to replace withdrawing Iraqi troops, provided they remain in Kuwait until the crisis is brought to an end.

4. A statement from Saudi Arabia that America and its allies pledge to return their land, sea, and air forces to their bases when the gulf crisis comes to an end.

5. An Arab League committee to chair direct negotiations along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti borders with a view to:

- A. Realize Kuwait's sovereignty with the acceptance of the Kuwaiti people.

- B. Resolve border problems, oil problems, and island and port problems between the Iraqi government and the new Kuwaiti government.

- C. Make any financial reparations from both sides.

6. Arab leaders would meet monthly within the framework of the Arab League to follow up measures aimed at ending the gulf crisis.

7. A political, economic, military, and cultural committee, comprised of neutral Arab rulers, to look into the repercussions of the gulf crisis on the deteriorating Arab conditions that caused the gulf crisis and to publicize its findings to the Arab people and the whole world when they become available.

The responsibility for the Arab region's security falls on the shoulders of the Arab countries exclusively, and the Arab League must submit a new security plan in keeping with the requirements of the time and resting on the arms and shoulders of the Arab people alone.

Conflict Between Jihad, New Splinter Group Discussed

91AA0082A Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic
26 Oct 90 pp 54-57

[Article by Najwan 'Abd-al-Latif: "Activists in Bani Suwayf. New Split Grows Out of 'Jihad' Cloak"]

[Excerpts] The Activists [al-Harakiyin] are a new branch sprouting out of the tree of radicalism in Bani Suwayf. They took a short cut and gave themselves a name derived from the word "action" [al-harakah]. Change through personal action is their aim, and changing people's conduct by force is their game.

The Activists are a new splinter group growing out from under the Jihad cloak and, while a decisive blow has been dealt the "al-Shawqiyyin" in al-Fayyum, the Activists, whose leader was assassinated almost a year ago, have maintained a presence on the violence map in Bani Suwayf.

I went to Bani Suwayf to look for them and try to learn how the people, the religious tendencies, and the security officers felt about this new phenomenon in Upper Egypt.

The Jihad group [jama'ah] did not stand idly by in the face of this group splitting off, so the Activists' leader's demise came at the hands of one of its members.

What is the story of the Activists and the tale behind their split?

Bani Suwayf is a poor Upper Egyptian governorate, an agricultural governorate with only two factories. It lacks potential for tourism, and the standard of living is somewhat low. Bani Suwayf, like most of the Upper Egyptian governorates, is inhabited by many Copts, and, like most of these governorates, it has active Islamic groups in the district capital while their presence in rural communities is marginal.

Shaykh Ahmad Yusuf, 32, who has a BA in business and owns the Jerusalem Ful Mudammas and Ta'miyah Restaurant, is an Islamic Group member in Bani Suwayf. Husam Muhammad al-Battuji, the number-two man in

the organization, is a Dar al-'Ulum College dropout and a former partner of Ahmad Yusuf in the restaurant.

In mid-1988, Ahmad Yusuf and Husan al-Battuji had a falling-out and they began hurling accusations at one another. Husam accused Shaykh Ahmad of being incapable of spreading the thoughts of Jihad and of failure to follow the shari'ah while changing the wrong. These differences prompted Husam and a group of followers to split off and form an organization they called "the Activists" [al-Harakiyin]. This splinter organization holds the same principles as the Jihad organization, with only one difference: it calls for changing the wrong through personal action, which is open to every member of the organization, and believes that the property and honor of nonmembers are fair game.

Jihad members, under the leadership of Yusuf, felt uneasy about this split, particularly since the conduct of the Activists, in their view, hurt their image with the people, and the differences between the two groups grew wider and wider.

Colonel al-Siba'i Abu-al-Layl, director of Bani Suwayf State Security, finished the story:

Each group began hurling accusations against the other. The Activists accused a Jihad element, who is a religious preacher working for the Ministry of Awqaf, of having a homosexual relationship with a young Christian man who had converted to Islam, joined the Jihad group, split with Husam al-Battuji, and joined the Activists. Sharif Qarni, an Activist, made a secret cassette recording of this young man's account of the scandalous details of his homosexual relationship. As a result, the Jihad member accused of this relationship and some group members abducted Sharif Qarni. They took him to the top floor of the Shadir Mosque, which belongs to the Jihad group, where they shaved off his moustache, his eyebrows, and his hair and roughed him up to force him to hand over the cassette. Then they stole 3,000 Egyptian pounds from him and forced him to sign blank checks.

Sharif Qarni reported this incident on 15 May 1989.

Each of the Jihad and Activist teams began to group together, carry side arms and highly inflammable liquids, and strike at the members of the other groups by setting their homes afire. They used to go out in something of a demonstration, carrying iron chains to strike terror in the hearts of the other team. City residents used to run to their homes and lock their doors whenever they caught sight of either of the two groups.

Note: except for the Sharif Qarni episode, these groups did not inform on each other. Neither did any of the Bani Suwayf residents.

Death of a Leader

How was the Activists' leader Husam al-Battuji killed?

The story, as told by Colonel Hasan Shalqami, chief of Bani Suwayf State Security, is as follows:

On 20 June 1989, in what looked like one of their habitual terror demonstrations, a group of 14 Jihad elements carrying swords and chains headed for Bani Suwayf General Hospital where Activists' leader Husam al-Battuji was. They surrounded the hospital and began beating Husam with chains and swords. Husam tried to get away by running to the top floor in search of an escape, but he could not run away. They attacked him and were not satisfied with just killing him but also mutilated his body in a horrible manner. The coroner's report said that Husam suffered stab wounds through the abdomen and lower chest and out the bowels, a cut in the middle of his right leg, amputation of his left thumb, cuts on his left fingers, cuts in the scalp, a cranial fracture, a cut in the right leg, a fracture and a cut across his left arm, and up-and-down cuts on his right and left forearms.

The leading Jihad members charged in this case are Majdi Kamal, Usamah Siddiq, Khalid Sulayman al-Banna, Tuhami 'Abdallah, Ashraf Yusuf Muhammad (brother of group leader Ahmad Yusuf), and Ashraf Abu-Sari'. Two defendants have been apprehended so far.

Permissible Theft

This is what they did to each other. What did they do to the general populace?

Lieutenant Colonel Ahmad Hisham of State Security said that they have accused everyone of unbelief and maligned every educated person for holding differing opinions. Shaykh al-Sha'rawi and Shaykh al-Ghazali were two religious leaders who were accused and ridiculed by the two groups in their speeches and seminars. The Activists group permits theft so long as it is directed against nonmembers and allows limited-time or temporary marriages. Therefore, members of this group proceeded to burglarize the homes of some Christians and steal their cars, like the burglaries committed by Jamal Salah Mayhub (fisherman), Ahmad Qarni (carpenter), Khalid 'Ali Hasan (civil servant), Ahmad 'Ali Ahmad (civil servant), and Husam Kamal-al-Din, who have been apprehended in one of the burglary cases. They have all confessed to the burglary of George Ya'qub's home as a punishment for dealing in alcohol; to the armed burglary of Wajih Labib's home, in the victim's presence, for gambling; and to the burglary of Shahatah Sadiq's store.

They also engage in extortion. The latest case in point was when Wasfi Fathi Ghali ran over a young boy, five-year-old Ahmad Shafi'i, in his car and broke his leg. The boy's father settled the matter with the perpetrator and turned down an offer for damages, so the Activists group stepped in and tried to blackmail the driver because he is a Christian. They asked for 5,000 pounds in damages and threatened to kill him and burn down his house. Two Activist members were apprehended after they were ambushed.

Furthermore, Muhammad Sa'd 'Abd-al-'Azim, the number-two man after Husam al-Battuji in the Activists organization, who is a college dropout and a food peddler, and an accomplice stole a private Peugeot car in Cairo, an irrigation machine in Bani Suwayf and the personal belongings of some Dutch tourists.

As for the Jihad group led by Ahmad Yusuf, their escapades are of a different kind. They stop pedestrians in the street, and, when they come across a man and woman who are not married or are not siblings walking together, they beat them up.

Another incident committed by the Jihad group was when a group went to a mosque during Friday prayers and assailed the mosque's blind imam and took the microphone away from him in an attempt to coerce him into joining them, but the people fought them and stopped them. Those radicals were carrying chains and sidearms. [passages omitted]

Recruiting the Young

During my tour in the city of Bani Suwayf, I heard about children, very young children, throwing piercing bombs at cars owned by Christians and vandalizing Christian property. How did they come to commit such radical actions?

In many schools, children are segregated: Muslims on one side and Christians on the other. The thoughts of radical Islamic groups have traversed school walls to such an extent that a Jihad group attacked the Technical Trade School for having a Christian teacher on its faculty.

How are Young Children Recruited?

Several recruiting methods are used, the most notable and significant of which is the holding of soccer tournaments in public courts where young boys flock to watch the games and are given candy, fruit, and toys. Group members scatter among the young spectators to talk to them and trap the poor and vulnerable. They forge friendships with them and invite them to their private mosques with a view to offering them private tutoring to help them in their studies. There is where the brainwashing journey begins. These children are then used in operations because they are minors and, therefore, are not subject to stiff penalties.

Security's Role

I went to the chief of security, Major General Ibrahim Muhsin Sarhan, with several questions on my mind. How can these radical Islamic groups be given free reign? Where were the security agencies when some members of these groups staged their terror demonstrations? Why did they let the schism among the groups get to the point of physical liquidation? And who holds the power now within the Bani Suwayf radical groups?

Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Muhsin Sarhan said: "To begin with, one must realize that the radical groups in Bani Suwayf

do not have as great a presence as in other Upper Egypt governorates such as Asyut, Minya, and al-Fayyum. But, Bani Suwayf may be the where the rift among these groups is most conspicuous. The rift is not for nothing and always centers on the quest for leadership.

"We have many groups here, the most prominent of which are the Jihad and the Activists, followed by the Salafis [al-Salafiyun], the Enjoining the Right and Forbidding the Wrong Group [Jama'ah al-Amr bil-Ma'ruf wa al-Nahi 'an al-Mankar], the Baniyah Group [Jama'ah al-Baniyah], the Firm Belief Group [al-'Aqidah al-Thabitah], and others.

"These groups have private mosques such as the Shadir and the Zawiyah 'Ala'-al-Tur'ah al-Ibrahimiyyah mosques. Many of these mosques have been converted into iron chain caches and ideological meeting places. We know their names and addresses, and the security apparatus is capable of standing up to them, but we must not forget that there is a measure of democracy in our society that allows the security apparatus to act only when society is in imminent danger. It is this democracy that enables these people to act, but we are intent on striking their strongholds one after the other.

"Yes, they are scattered all over the schools and among young boys, and we are trying to stave off such matters, but this is not just a security issue.

"There is a political vacuum in the governorate. I hold all the existing parties, be it the National Party or the opposition parties, responsible for this vacuum. They left the arena open for these groups to do whatever they please. Also, there are economic problems, such as poverty and unemployment afflicting the common people. The great majority of members joining the group in recent years have been unemployed college and technical school graduates and a solution to this problem must be found.

"Many people join these groups for a purpose which some people may find trivial: they get the prestige that allows them certain privileges such as getting cooking gas bottles at the regular price and bread without having to stand in line.

"The other problem is that these groups do not take the religious garb in Upper Egypt as a backdrop. Besides, in the late seventies when they were allowed to strike at other political tendencies, these groups were able to strike fear and terror in people's hearts. They were feared by everyone, including their opponents who refrained from making their ideas and feelings known to avoid retribution.

"You ask me about the terror demonstrations. Can you believe that the only thing the people do in the face of such demonstrations is to shut their doors and stay inside their homes? Not a single person has reported them.

"Even those hurt by these groups do not report what happened to them. And if they do report the incident, they refuse to give the names of the perpetrators even though they know them very well.

"I call upon the populace to take positive action against these groups. I was very pleased when a mayor of one of the villages of Ihnasia apprehended a radical element who tried to instigate the students in one of the schools.

"The problem is that we are a forgetful people. We forget what they did in al-Zawiyah al-Hamra', in Asyut, in Abu-Qirgas, and in al-Fayyum. To stand up to them, we have to remember their actions, because their continued violence poses a real threat to the security and safety of our society.

"Also, to be able to draw up a practical plan to counteract them, we need general coordination among all the agencies in Egypt. We must not allow schoolmasters and teachers to instill the poison of radicalism in our children at an early age, and we must not allow local council leaders to use their influence to dictate such destructive thoughts.

"All of us ought to have a true will to confront this scheme aimed at Egypt and its people. You asked me for my evaluation of their movement at this time. Ever since the Abu-Qirgas events and more so following the merger of a group of Shawqiyyin, they have been in a dormant state. Their sources of finance have dried up in the wake of gulf events, but this does not mean that they have let up, for they have many ways to get funds, the most notable of which is burglary. They have actually recruited many dangerous ex-convicts to commit robberies, some of which have yielded half a million Egyptian pounds. They look for many ways to carry out their actions, and we must all look for ways to counteract them, but this cannot be done through security alone." [passage omitted]

Who is the Murderer?

I learned from a security officer that Khalid al-Banna, who was charged with the murder of Husam al-Battuji, is being held at the Ihnasia prison. I asked to meet with him and was told that he was an abnormal and unbalanced person. Nevertheless, I left for Ihnasia where I met with 28-year-old Khalid. He was wearing a white jalabiya, a long beard, and a skullcap. He said to me: "You should have let me know that the press was going to be here to take photos so that I could have been more presentable." He asked Sha'ban 'Abd-al-Tawwab, chief of Ihnasia State Security, for a comb to fix his hair and took off his glasses to have his photo taken. Then he said:

"I do not know this Husam I am accused of murdering. I have only heard of him."

['Abd-al-Latif] What have you heard?

[Al-Banna] That he likes to have his way!

['Abd-al-Latif] Is he violent?

[Al-Banna] I don't know exactly.

[Abd-al-Latif] Are you a member of the Ahmad Yusuf group?

[Al-Banna] I do not follow anyone. God has given us the koran and the sunnah.

[Abd-al-Latif] What is your relationship with Ahmad Yusuf?

[Al-Banna] We are neighbors.

[Abd-al-Latif] Are you friends?

[Al-Banna] Only neighbors.

[Abd-al-Latif] How do you see the people around you?

[Al-Banna] They are sinners.

[Abd-al-Latif] How do you handle that.

[Al-Banna] I try to counsel them to avoid sin.

[Abd-al-Latif] Do you counsel only your relatives and friends?

[Al-Banna] Any Muslim I meet on the street.

[Abd-al-Latif] Do you right the wrong with your own hands?

[Al-Banna] Hands are not for the helpless people, but rather for those who are the cause of this country's squalor.

[Abd-al-Latif] Whom do you mean?

[Al-Banna] The government and the Jews who stand behind it.

[Abd-al-Latif] The Jews or the Americans?

[Al-Banna] The Jews, even Bush is a Jew.

[Abd-al-Latif] Bush is a Christian.

[Al-Banna] No, he is Jewish.

He said that with a loud voice and his face turned angry and sullen. He then began babbling incoherently about them wanting to set up military bases in Egypt and wanting to control everything, about the people knowing nothing, and that everything was bad, even the air. He said that the devil was in control and that the country did not have any religion because it is a Muslim country that has a cigarette factory.

I asked him what he thought of the Shawqiyyin and those who deemed the killing of Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman permissible. He said: "I do not know anything about them, and I cannot talk about them. What are you driving at, that Husam al-Battuji was killed in a commotion? Who knows who killed him in this commotion."

[Abd-al-Latif] How do you deal with Christians?

[Al-Banna] Within the limits of business transactions, buying and selling, and superficial dealings only.

[Abd-al-Latif] Do you have any friends among them?

[Al-Banna] (With indignation) God forbid! Take them not for your friends. So must we heed God's orders and not forge relations of friendship and affection with them.

[Abd-al-Latif] The Prophet married Maria, the Copt.

[Al-Banna] After she converted to Islam.

[Abd-al-Latif] That is not true. She converted after marriage.

[Al-Banna] (With rage) What I know and have read in books is that she converted before marriage.

Meeting With Chief

I left Ihnasia with the idea of meeting with one person, Ahmad Yusuf, chief of the Islamic groups in Bani Suwayf, because I had heard so much about his ability to take many young men and boys into his group and about the way he managed his feuds with the dissidents. [passages omitted]

I said: "What do you think of today's incident in which a young boy suffered critical injuries when Islamic elements attacked him?"

He said: "We must differentiate between Islam and beards. Muslims must grow their beards, but not every bearded person is a Muslim. There are intruders whose aim is to defame Islam. Islam is a religion of natural instinct that cannot sanction theft and beating.

"We should look at the dangerous pressures society is coming under. There is a vast difference between what God wants and what society is doing."

[Abd-al-Latif] Are you calling for the application of the Islamic shari'ah?

[Yusuf] It is not only a matter of applying the shari'ah. We are not advocates of the shari'ah. Society needs to return to God, and the shari'ah is not an end in itself. Society needs radical change. When it turns into an Islamic community, that would be the time to apply the shari'ah. Applying the shari'ah now would be useless, as evidenced by the Sudanese experience.

[Abd-al-Latif] Why did Husam al-Battuji break away from your group to form the Activists' group?

[Yusuf] Husam is an old friend. We have been friends since elementary school. We went to jail together when al-Sadat was assassinated. It is not a matter of breaking away. What happened is that some malevolent sides drove a wedge between the two parties that led to a schism. I tried to bring the brothers together. I sent for Shaykh Husayn, the Muslim Brotherhood representative in Bani Suwayf, and we made peace between Husam and some of his followers and the other side.

[Abd-al-Latif] What was the disagreement all about? Was it due to indecent relations?

[Yusuf] It was merely a matter of groundless slander, but the quarrel intensified for no apparent reason.

[Abd-al-Latif] Who killed Husam?

[Yusuf] I was in prison two days after we made peace, and I got out of prison a week later, one day after Husam's murder. Husam was a violent man, and I admit that the beginning of Husam's end came at the hands of group elements. Group members do not keep anything from me. They tell me when they kill someone. But, I do not know who mutilated Husam's body.

[Abd-al-Latif] Husam wanted to change the wrong by hand. Are you against this?

[Yusuf] I am not against changing the wrong by hand, for this is God's will. In this Godless society, but, we must first try to do it amicably and with kindness. Why not go to a sinner carrying a gift and ask him to repent?

[Abd-al-Latif] Why are you the most disunited religious tendency?

[Yusuf] I admit to that and say that this is the work of the devil and that I hope it will end.

[Abd-al-Latif] What do you think of the Muslim Brotherhood and their alliance with the Labor Party?

[Yusuf] They are brothers in Islam. As for the alliance, Islam disapproves of it and, indeed, of all other political parties. There is only the party of God and the party of the Devil. One can be [only] with one or the other.

[Abd-al-Latif] This is a means to power. Don't you want your group to get to power?

[Yusuf] I disapprove of these means, but I have the right to aspire like others. But we want it for the hereafter, and they want it for this world.

[Abd-al-Latif] How do you propagate your call?

[Yusuf] We have our mosques, and we move between the village mosques and the centers around us. We are in touch with schools, with students, and with public gatherings.

[Abd-al-Latif] Do you take your call to children?

[Yusuf] At the age of puberty, 12. Children must be asked to understand their religion.

[Abd-al-Latif] Do you tell Muslim children to avoid their Christian brothers?

[Yusuf] They are not brothers. Our relations with Christians are limited to calling upon them to be guided and believe in Islam. It is not right to forge friendships and relationships with them. This is forbidden.

He repeated to me what Khalid al-Banna had told me about this point, that love and friendship could only be among Muslims; that the contention that Egyptians must have affection and brotherly feelings for one another is impermissible; and that Christians are the enemies of God and the only thing to do is give them their rights and treat them with Islamic tolerance.

I returned from Bani Suwayf with endless questions on my mind. How much longer will organizations continue to sprout in Egypt? From under the coat of an organization comes a splinter organization with a branch on its coattails. And the proliferation goes on with no end in sight.

NDP Charged With Election Tampering, Tactics Listed

91AA0078A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 31 Oct 90 p 3

[Article by Muntasir Jabir: "Rigging Elections Is Ruling Party Industry; Government's Counterfeiting Instruments: Policemen, Village Mayors and Chiefs and Local Government Officials; Government Party Men Vote in More Than One District"]

[Text] The opposition parties' decision to boycott the upcoming People's Assembly elections has not come out of the blue. The black history of the ruling party's governments in holding parliamentary elections is the best witness to the various methods and ways in which the elections have been rigged in every village and city.

The citizen, accused of negativism and of failing to participate politically by voting in the elections, has only taken this position to reject the cheap tampering with his vote.

In this report, we will note the incidents of rigging that occurred in the previous elections and record the testimony of veteran parliamentarians who have experienced the counterfeiting of the nation's will and of the voters' votes.

The People's Assembly elections held under the umbrella of the NDP [National Democratic Party] governments have witnessed numerous and varied counterfeiting and rigging activities, and citizens have become certain that the NDP government practices of rigging the elections have become exposed and well known. The court decision declaring the previous People's Assembly and its electoral law null and void is nothing but proof of the government's counterfeiting and falsifying of the voters' will. As a reminder to the government, which is wondering about the opposition parties' decision to boycott the upcoming assembly elections, we place before it and before the citizens the various means and methods which were used for counterfeiting and tampering in the past and that will be used again in the upcoming elections. As soon as the election date is announced, the government begins counterfeiting, with the backing of all the executive agencies that it controls and that obey its instructions.

Brainwash

The law entitles all candidates to engage in election propaganda. Considering that the ruling party government controls all the information media, it disseminates direct and indirect propaganda for its candidates free of charge, as was the case on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of President Mubarak's assumption of power when television used most of its transmission hours to review the president's accomplishments in the past nine years—accomplishments inevitably attributed to the ruling NDP.

The counterfeiting methods include:

Voter lists that contain the names of deceased and emigrant citizens who always vote for the government party. A strong blow was dealt to the ruling party in the 1979 election when the Labor Party candidate running for election in Minuf District discovered that 500 deceased citizens had voted for the government candidate.

Threatening village mayors and chiefs with dismissal if government candidates do not win in their districts and requiring these officials to report any individual who promotes opposition party candidates.

Using the vehicles of governorate departments and of city councils to promote the ruling party candidates throughout the days preceding the election and on election day as well.

Changing the offices of election committees suddenly so as to put obstacles in the voters' path. This happened in al-Jizah in the last elections when the local council chairman deceived the voters and led them away from the polling stations in the first district by issuing a confidential decree changing the sites of the offices of 14 committees in al-Duqqi, of five committees in al-'Ajazah, of six committees in the areas of Mit 'Aqabah, and of the journalists' and engineers' committees. The sites of the women's voting committees were also changed without prior notice.

Appointing district citizens who are employees of various government ministries as chairmen of the election committees of their own districts, as happened in al-Bajur District in 1987.

Pressure exerted by the executive leaderships, with the assistance of the police, on representatives of candidates of the opposition parties with threats at times and with arrest in accordance with the state of emergency law at other times. This is what happened in numerous districts in the previous election, including Damietta where 58 representatives of opposition party candidates were arrested. This is in addition to placing obstacles in the way of the representatives to prevent them from acquiring general or private authorizations—obstacles in the form of a series of redtape measures required to

acquire the authorizations—whereas the NDP representatives are given these blank checks for these authorizations.

Election Day Farces

From 0800 to 1700 on election day and then during the vote count, actions occur that are condoned by no law or constitution in any country that respects its citizens. Within the first few hours, a muscle show is staged by deploying central security forces and special forces around the election committees' offices, as happened in the previous election in al-Fayyum when 15 vehicles carrying troops of the central security forces, and five vehicles carrying special troops surrounded the committees' offices. Meanwhile, the governorate did not send the vehicle allocated to bring magistrates from Bani Suwayf to supervise the elections until noon on election day. Thus, the citizens were intimidated and kept away from the polling stations. Consequently, the ballots were filled in favor of the ruling party in the absence of the judiciary. Fights were, of course, fabricated, and the opposition parties' representatives were expelled from the committees with police force, thus permitting all forms and shapes of counterfeiting.

In the remote governorates, women are used to counterfeit and falsify the elections by issuing administrative certificates carrying no photographs. These certificates are distributed to women instead of personal identity cards and election cards. This trick is used so that the same voter may vote repeatedly throughout the election day. In North Sinai, women and teenage girls no older than 14 kept on coming and lining up in front of the committees' offices from 0800 till 1700, carrying in their hands these administrative certificates which are distributed by tribal chieftains appointed officially by the Ministry of Interior! This means that a few women from these tribes vote repeatedly throughout the day for the benefit of the ruling party.

As for the vote-counting process, it is chaotic. The count is made by the main committees which use police stations as their offices. This makes it easier to counterfeit and tamper with the votes, especially when all the district's ballot boxes are opened at once. It is then that chaos erupts and when it becomes possible to nullify the opposition votes by marking their correct ballots and by using other means of forgery and falsification that the government and its men have mastered.

We now come to the testimony of veteran parliamentarians to hear from them what they have to say and how their testimony goes.

Computer Genius

Muhammad Ahmad Labib, a Wafdist parliamentarian who has personally experienced the bitterness of elections and of the acts committed to perjure them, an ex-People's Assembly member, and an ex-governor of Bani Suwayf, has said:

The tampering begins with the voter lists by adding to the lists an extra number of voters that greatly exceeds the real number of voters in the district or village. The same name is registered with more than one election committee. The ruling party men, not the citizens, keep the voting cards. This is done in the villages so that nobody may go to the committees' offices. The ruling party men are thus able to fill the ballots in favor of the ruling party. If the citizens proceed to cast their votes, especially with the committees in which the opposition parties are strong, then fights are fabricated, and the police come at the request of the committee chairman to expel representatives of the opposition parties. Thus, the ruling party men take the opportunity to fill the ballots in their favor. On election day, citizens are allowed to vote without an election card or an identity card as long as the village mayor confirms that a voter is the same person registered in the lists. Using this trick, ruling party members thus vote repeatedly throughout the election day.

'Ali Salamah, a veteran parliamentarian, an ex-assembly member, and assistant secretary general of the al-Wafd Party, has said:

There are numerous and varied forms of counterfeiting. Some take place before the election campaign and some during the campaign. The first includes the division of districts. The ruling regime has divided the districts solely on its own and without the participation of the opposition parties. The decision was not presented to the public opinion before a law was issued on it. We then come to the tampering with the voter lists which continue to include the names of deceased people, of conscripts, and of emigrants. Since 1976, we have been demanding that these lists be purged but they refuse because they employ the lists to mark the ballots in their favor. They even resort to registering voters more than once. They register a voter one time at his work place and another time at his place of residence. This is a widespread phenomenon, and it is an open violation of the constitution. With a single glance at the district division system, we find that the offices of the main election committees are located in police precincts and stations. These are the committees that do the vote counting. Thus, we find that the entire process is performed in the government's bosom and in the middle of military garrisons that intimidate voters and that prevent the opposition representatives from being present at the vote count! We have demanded that vote casting be done in writing solely in order to preserve vote confidentiality, considering that symbols are used. We have also demanded that the voter's personal or family identity card be marked when he has cast the vote so that he may not vote again. We have also demanded that the representatives accompany the ballot boxes when they are moved to the vote-counting committees so that they may not be replaced on the way. But these demands have been rejected because they are not in the ruling party's interest and because they oppose this party's election-rigging practices. An important step that we have

demand is to have the judiciary supervise the printing of ballots at the government printing presses so that the number of ballots printed may tally with the number of voters registered in the voter lists, because the government prints extra ballots to be used for counterfeiting when necessary.

'Ali Salamah went on to add: Their determination not to let the judiciary supervise the election committees is nothing but insistence on counterfeiting. Their allegation that there aren't enough magistrates to cover all districts is null because the election can be held over several days. Many countries do this. Moreover, why isn't pressure put on the districts?

Editor Denounces Israeli Motives for al-Aqsa 'Massacre'

91AA0026A Cairo *AL-AHRAM AL-DUWALI* in Arabic
11 Oct 90 pp 1, 3

[Article by Ibrahim Nafi': "Al-Aqsa Mosque Massacre and True Israeli Motives"]

[Text] With its heinous crime against the Palestinians and with its violation of the sanctity of the al-Aqsa Mosque, Israeli policy is again confirming its determination to deal with the Palestinian issue foolishly and rashly, having previously foiled numerous attempts and wasted numerous Egyptian endeavors to develop a suitable solution to this difficult issue.

At a time when all international efforts are focused on ending the Gulf crisis, the Israeli authorities escalate their brutal suppression of the Palestinians within the context of successive acts which must inevitably lead in the end to sabotaging these efforts.

Israel has committed its crime without heeding Egypt's warning to it not to exploit the world's preoccupation with Gulf developments to settle its accounts with the Palestinians in the occupied territories. These authorities have persisted in their acts of escalation until they culminated with the bloody incidents witnessed by the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard in Jerusalem. These incidents are truly a brutal massacre by all human and political standards, not to mention a violation of the sanctity of religious places and places of worship. International treaties stipulate that Israel, as an occupying power, is responsible for protecting these places.

But why did Israel perpetrate this dreadful massacre at this particular time?

What is the true nature and what are the motives of these Israeli acts which, undoubtedly, make it most likely that what happened in the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard was not just a passing incident which occurred unintentionally and not just a mere reaction to the protest staged by the Palestinians in response to the attempt by radical Jews to storm the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyard and build a Jewish temple. What is more likely is that there has been a

premeditated Israeli arrangement to escalate the suppression against the Palestinians in a manner unprecedented since Shamir's current rightist cabinet was formed. This escalation can be interpreted at three overlapping levels:

1. At the level of the Israeli approach to the Palestinians, the indications are that there is a scheme to foil an expected escalation of the intifadah [uprising] in the wake of the agreement recently reached between Fatah and Islamic Hamas to freeze the relations [presumably meaning disagreements] existing between the two movements and to unify their efforts to confront the Israeli occupation. This agreement has foiled Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens' wager on the possibility of exploiting the contradictions between these two parties—contradictions nurtured by their different positions toward the Gulf crisis and by the increased clashes between their followers in the period preceding the agreement they have concluded. It is no coincidence that Arens' previous policy, which was based on relative pacification and on exploiting the Palestinian contradictions, was the subject of public criticism by many of the Israeli cabinet ministers, led by Sharon who has aspired to the position of defense minister in order to forcefully wipe out the intifadah. This policy's failure in recent days caused Arens to escalate the oppression which climaxed in the bloody al-Aqsa Mosque massacre.

2. It is certain that what has happened is connected with the anxiety being currently experienced by Israel as a result of the U.S. determination to exclude it from participation in the international and regional effort to end the Gulf crisis. This U.S. position has led to an intensifying Israeli feeling that Israel's previous status within the western strategic schemes is declining. This concern has been worrying Israel since U.S.-Soviet relations moved in the direction of the international detente which has put an end to the cold-war phase.

Even though the Israeli Government has so far obeyed to the letter the U.S. instructions telling it not to interfere in the Gulf crisis, it has done so with displeasure and with a growing feeling of concern over the strategic importance of other countries in the region, be they Arab countries, most significantly Egypt, or non-Arab countries, especially Turkey.

What raises the temperature of Israeli concern is that the Palestinians in the occupied territories have expressed in different forms their awareness of Israel's declining status, and this could constitute another element in intensifying their resistance in the coming period. Consequently, escalating the oppression in order to foil this possibility becomes an additional motive for the current Israeli practices.

3. Added to all this at the international level is the growing interest expressed by several major powers on the need to develop a solution to the Palestinian issue when the Gulf crisis is ended.

It is most likely that the Israeli Government has been surprised by this interest which it had not expected, especially the interest expressed by British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and President Mitterand who have stressed the idea of settling the Palestinian issue after the Gulf crisis and of developing a comprehensive settlement for the Middle East problem. This interest has been coupled with obvious criticism of the Israeli policy vis-a-vis this issue. This development has actually surprised Israel which has been tickled by broad hopes that the Gulf crisis would lead to freezing the Palestinian issue for a long time, or even to burying the issue forever.

It is evident here that the Israelis have made their calculations on the basis of inaccurate estimates of the requirements of the new international climate which proposes to deal with the various regional centers of tension that negatively affect the international detente. There is no doubt that the current situation in the occupied territories is one of the most significant of these inflamed centers which will necessarily get their turn in the search for solutions.

Egypt has been careful to draw the attention of the Israelis to their faulty calculations by underlining its principled position vis-a-vis the Palestinian issue and by stressing that this position is not influenced by the excesses or violations committed by some PLO leaderships. The Israeli Government should have realized this from the reality of the past experiences which confirm Egypt's principled eagerness to make a distinction between its position toward this fateful Arab issue and its disagreement with any faulty practices or any excesses committed by the PLO or by sectors of the Palestinian people. Every time such a disagreement develops, the matter always ends with the Palestinians realizing the soundness of the Egyptian position and acknowledging every time that the Egyptian position is the one most eager and zealous for the fate of their issue.

When Egypt rejects the latest Israeli practices strongly and when it emphasizes clearly its denunciation of the brutal suppression of the Palestinians, it thus confirms that it is impossible for Israel to exploit the disagreements connected with the Gulf crisis and directs Israel's attention to the fact that there is no alternative to developing a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue in order to establish stability in the region when the Gulf crisis is ended and when Kuwait regains its sovereignty and restores its legitimate government.

Therefore, the Israeli Government must reconsider as of the moment its entire, and worsening, position toward this issue in preparation for a new phase in the history of this region that has been drained by the conflicts, wars, and sea of hatred. It is obvious that one of the most significant mainstays of the new international system which has truly appeared before the entire world is the reaffirmation and observation of the international legitimacy which Israel has long tried to avoid. Perhaps this explains to us this international interest in the need to solve the Palestinian issue after the Gulf crisis. This is

clearly different from the banal linkage about which some talk, especially the Iraqi propaganda machine. This linkage fundamentally obstructs a solution to either problem. For example, the Security Council resolutions on the invasion of Kuwait state clearly that Iraq must withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait before any negotiations, whereas Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 clarify the method of negotiation for the Israeli occupier's withdrawal from the Arab territories. Linking the Iraqi invasion and the Palestinian issue is intended here to cement and entrench Iraq's control of Kuwait until negotiations between Israel and each of the PLO, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon take place.

Considering that Israel continues to reject any just solution to the Palestinian issue, then the danger, the full danger, now lies in the fact that, with its latest brutally oppressive practices, Israel negatively affects the possibility of solving the Gulf crisis and bolsters the hysterical approach which is used to reshuffle all the cards in order to obstruct solving either problem.

We here do not find it at all unlikely that this Israeli conduct is premeditated conduct emanating from Israel's fear that ending the Gulf crisis will lead to focusing the world's attention on solving the Palestinian issue. In this case, confronting this conduct gains redoubled importance. Egypt has performed its full duty in this regard. The various world powers concerned with establishing stability and balance in the region must perform their role as well.

In any case, Israel, which has smeared its hand with Palestinian blood inside the sanctuary of al-Aqsa Mosque, will not achieve its objectives and will only reap disappointment and regret.

Gulf Returnees Face Difficult Circumstances

Financial Problems

91AA0028A Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 8 Oct 90 p 3

[Article by 'Ali Maghrabi: "What Happened to the National Bank of Kuwait Computer Disc? Why Has Bank Failed to Respond to Clients' Inquiries?"]

[Text] The main problem hanging over the heads of returnees from Kuwait and causing them anxiety and distress is the lack of information about the banking situation and their Kuwaiti bank accounts following their return to Egypt. Consultant Shafiq Imam and some returnees say that such anxiety is due to the fact that, before the Iraqi invasion, business in Kuwait used to be transacted through banks and bank cards and, since all returnees, whether they had lived in Kuwait for one year or twenty or more years, had their money in Kuwaiti banks, they returned without adequate liquidity. It is no secret that many Egyptians who had returned for good even before the Iraqi invasion had money and deposits in Kuwaiti banks and that, in the face of the upheaval,

confusion, and mental state that afflicted Kuwaiti cities, many returnees did not know anything about the status of their bank accounts.

Here a question poses itself about the true status of bank accounts and available funds and how they can be identified.

A senior Kuwaiti economic consultant said that the day following the Iraqi invasion, the computer data disc was smuggled to London where the National Bank of Kuwait has a branch. The computer data disc is the most important and critical information center through which the status of Egyptian and foreign bank accounts and available funds in Kuwaiti banks, before the aggression, can be identified. This will contribute greatly to the settlement of this problem in the future and also when legitimacy is restored to Kuwait.

Basket of Currencies

I said: "Whereas the smuggling of the computer data disc can dispel part of the returnees' anxiety and give them peace of mind, another concern is the current value of the Kuwaiti dinar and the loss of life savings in terms of value and financial position!"

The Kuwaiti economic consultant replied, saying: "I would like to make it clear that the Kuwaiti banking community did not transact all its business in Kuwaiti dinars, but also used the basket of currencies system that is a group of different currencies made up of the dinar, the dollar, the British pound, the Japanese yen, and the German mark. We adopted this system after the Manakh incident when Kuwaiti stock markets crashed some years ago. Of course, the basket of currencies will contribute a great deal to the protection of client accounts when things calm down, something we are trying to expedite with world banks."

Egyptians in Difficult Position

The difficult position Egyptian returnees from Kuwait encountered was that some of them had checks drawn on Egyptian banks before 2 August, the fateful day in the life of Kuwait, and others had checks issued by money changers or finance companies. Majdi 'Atallah Munsî said that he went to the Bank of Egypt's al-'Abbasiyah Branch to cash a check issued on 2 August, but the check was returned to him pending instructions. He was told that waiting lists were being prepared to cash checks when they received instructions because they could not do that on the basis of available funds in Kuwaiti banks.

'Adil Muhammad 'Ali said that he took his check to the Egypt National Bank on which it was drawn, but was asked to return later because instructions and available funds did not permit the cashing of checks. The same story was told by Khalid Muhammad Muhammad, Zaynat al-Sa'dawi, and Ashraf Imam, and the same situation was encountered at the Bank of Alexandria, Bank of Cairo, and Bank of Egypt branches.

Cashing Checks When Available Funds Allow

Egyptian banking officials commented on the phenomenon of not cashing checks by saying that the cashing of checks issued as of 2 August will be done when allowed by Kuwaiti banks' funds in Egypt or by finance companies like the 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Yusri and 'Ali al-Muzin companies with which most Egyptians deal, and that the current situation depends on contacts the Kuwaiti Trust Group, set up in London after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, is holding with the Central Bank and Kuwaiti banks. In reply to the returnees' inquiries about Kuwaiti bank and company funds at some banks, bank officials said that the available funds could not cover all debts of checks made out to depositors and that several solutions were being considered, like awaiting the arrival of adequate funds, cashing one or two checks for each client, or cashing checks in accordance with waiting lists kept at some branches and preparing such lists at branches that do not have them. Officials emphasized that they were intent on reaching a solution to this problem with national and joint banks, especially since some investment banks with funds greater than the value of checks drawn on them have been honoring checks.

Egyptians Should Receive Same Settlement as Europeans

Ramadan Taha al-Laythi al-Muhami demanded, and some returnees supported this demand, that "the problem of checks already issued to returnees should be promptly settled the same way the problem of many European expatriates in Kuwait, like the Swiss, Swedes, and others was settled. We have heard that the Kuwaiti Trust Group has made the necessary funds available for such checks. Furthermore, concerning the existing accounts of Egyptian returnees, we hope that they will be settled when the National Bank of Kuwait's computer disc is processed or through future agreements."

Custom Clearance for Cars

The number-two problem facing returnees from Kuwait and Iraq center on clearing cars through customs. After the government granted them many facilities for clearing their cars on the spot through outlets and for making payments over two years, and after preparing a bill to collect customs fees on these cars, they say that the bill has several loopholes that may force them to leave their cars at the customs outlets or to sell them to dealers, in which case the government stands to lose much.

They summed up their proposal in several points, including:

- That cars were the only means for returning home;
- Customs drafted the bill on the assumption that they had returned for good and did not consider their return from Kuwait;
- Customs did not consider that the returnees, 90 percent of whom are in a pitiful financial situation, did not have liquidity.

A two-year payment plan is not enough to pay up customs fees and they propose a one-year grace period during which the financial position and circumstances of each could be determined in light of arrangements worked out between the Central Bank and the National Bank of Kuwait, and if payment has to be made, it should be over five or seven years in recognition of their compelling circumstances.

The bill affords equal treatment to those who worked in Kuwait and Iraq for two years and those who worked for 20 years. This is unfair to those who worked only one or two years because early earnings abroad are usually used to furnish a home and buy a car, a necessity at this stage.

The bill failed to consider the circumstances of returnees bringing in new model cars that, under the new law, they have to buy when they return home for good because, in this situation, old cars are not allowed into the country, and that the duties on such cars range between 40,000 and 60,000 Egyptian pounds. In the face of this, and if the bill is not passed soon, this group of people will be forced to sell their cars to dealers who would take advantage of the two-year period for paying duties on such cars. Other people may obtain a six-month customs clearance grace period, after which they can circumvent the law by taking the car out to a nearby country and bringing it in to once again take advantage of the grace period, thus denying customs any profit.

The five percent annual deduction rate of up to 40 percent for old cars should be raised to 50 percent, payable within a year, because most of the returnees had to bring back their 1980 cars, for example, on which they had to pay between 12,000 and 14,000 pounds in duty fees. This amount may be higher than the actual value of the car, thus forcing owners to abandon their cars at customs to buy a new car, if they wished. Such cars are then auctioned off for no more than 4,000 pounds to dealers or perhaps to the returnees themselves.

Employment of Craftsmen

'Abd-al-Rahman Tal'at, member of the board of directors of the General Union of Building and Construction Workers, talked about the difficulties craftsmen face, saying:

"More than 70 percent of returnees are craftsmen, construction workers, plumbers, and painters, namely skilled labor very much in need in Egypt. Generally speaking, this group has fewer problems than others in practicing their trade. However, there has to be a system in place to take advantage of these capabilities so as not to allow them to go to waste, to go idle, or to be controlled by middlemen or masters, in Upper Egyptian governorates in particular. To solve this problem, employment offices should be set up in every governorate to take in this work force and steer it in the best direction, provided that such a process is coordinated between the Ministry of Manpower, the Labor Federation, and the General Union."

'Abd-al-Rahman Tal'at believes that banks should act fast to supply this work force with the needed machinery and equipment so that they may resume their trades in the community, in new cities particularly, since many of them belong to the young craftsmen sector.

In conclusion, this is a firsthand look at the problems of people dealing with employment banks, customs, and the craftsman sector. These are simple problems that can be solved to allow Egypt to take advantage of its creative capabilities now that the Egyptian government has done everything it can to facilitate the safe return of its people.

Numbers Reportedly Over 337,000

91AA0028A Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 8 Oct 90 p 6

[Article: "337,000 Egyptian Returnees from Kuwait and Iraq as of Yesterday"]

[Text] As of yesterday, 337,362 Egyptians and 16,024 cars had returned home from Kuwait and Iraq, according to Engineer Sulayman Mitwalli, minister of transportation and communications and supervisor of the returnees operations room. The minister added that 2,291 citizens arrived yesterday, 1,191 of whom came by air on five Saudi and Portuguese airline flights and 1,100 by sea up to Nuwaybi' Port, besides 22 cars.

Engineer Sulayman Mitwalli referred to news reports that 300,000 Egyptian nationals will cross the Jordanian border soon, saying that, in the early days of the crisis, the operations room was able to transport all Egyptians who crossed Jordanian borders and is now capable of operating at maximum speed.

Writer Speculates on Bank Account Confidentiality Issue

91AA0046A Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic
14 Oct 90 pp 20, 21

[Article by Muhsin Hasanayn]

[Text] What happens under the new bank account confidentiality law?! Since the promulgation of President Husni Mubarak's resolution to apply the law as of 3 October 1990, a major question has been posing itself persistently to persons who deal on the financial markets in Egypt and the Gulf.

This major question has produced an explosion of minor questions for which answers are being sought. For example, if the new law imposes confidentiality on bank accounts, does that mean that the banking system did not provide confidentiality? If confidentiality did in fact exist previously, as stressed and resolutely maintained by all officials in our banking system, why was the law promulgated? What does the new law add? What is the government's goal in issuing it? Are employees in our banking system able to absorb the philosophy and technology of confidential accounts?

Have the various state agencies prepared themselves to receive the funds that are expected to flow to the country as a result of the application of the law? Are they prepared to benefit from these funds in the best possible manner?

Before we deal with all of that, we should ask about money from drug deals and the exchange of currency? Would it not find a safe haven amid all of this keeping silent and secrecy provided under the new law? Many questions have burst forth following the promulgation of the law. I can find no better recourse but to take them as they are and pose them to a number of senior bank officials and investors in the Gulf, so that we can perhaps obtain some answers to them.

New Aspects in the Law

Banking custom was for a long time guided by the principle of preserving client confidentiality before the new law was issued. The new law adds important new elements. In the forefront of these elements, according to an Egyptian banking expert in the Gulf, Dr. Nabil Hashad, is the fact that the new law is the first law to be clearly and especially intended to regulate account confidentiality. He states that the new law differs from the professional banking confidentiality system, which depended more on prevailing custom than on clear, legal provisions. The account confidentiality law aims at the same confidentiality observed by the banking profession in order to protect individual interests. However, it also aims at providing more comprehensive protection of confidentiality, which is regarded as a supreme economic interest of the state.

In light of banking customs that prevailed previously, it was not permitted to plead professional confidentiality to conceal any information that might be requested from a bank by any official agency, such as the Tax Agency and others. However, following the promulgation and application of the new law, a bank official may use the provisions of the new law as justification to confront public authorities requesting any information on clients' accounts.

Bank laws in Switzerland and Italy stipulate a bank's refraining from providing any information to fiscal and administrative authorities regarding its clients' accounts. Such a stipulation also exists in Lebanese law, which adds other constraints. Thus, under Lebanese law, clients' secrets cannot be disclosed to individuals or administrative or judicial authorities, except in specific cases, such as in the event written permission is obtained from the client or his heir, or there is a decision to declare bankruptcy, or there is a conflict between the client and the bank. The Lebanese provision is almost the same as the provision found in the new banking confidentiality law.

The penalty for vitiating account confidentiality under the account confidentiality law is more severe than the penalty for vitiating professional confidentiality.

The new law stipulates a sentence of imprisonment for a period of no less than one year and a fine of no less than 10,000 Egyptian pounds and no more than 20,000 Egyptian pounds for anyone divulging confidential information on a client's accounts, deposits, trusts, or safe deposit boxes in banks.

It is well-known, states Dr. Hashad, that the penalties stipulated by Swiss law are imprisonment for six months or a fine of 200,000 Swiss francs for an employee who divulges confidential information regarding clients. In other words, the penalties of the new Egyptian law are more severe than the penalties of the Swiss law.

Dr. Hashad indicates that several banks in Egypt were granted account confidentiality by law before the issuance of the new law, inasmuch as Law Number 77 of 1971, which pertains to the establishment of the Arab International Bank, stipulates that no person or agency is permitted to examine the accounts of depositors or to take legal measures against them. It also stipulates that it is not permitted to take any judicial or administrative sequestration measures regarding such accounts, with the understanding that the bank is not subject to the control of the Central Accounting Agency or the Administrative Prosecutor's Office.

The new account confidentiality law gives more comprehensive emphasis to account confidentiality and extends its application to other banks. It does so because of the numerous benefits obtained from such measures, which are represented in the mobilization of savings domestically and abroad in order to improve the performance level of economic activity.

The Timing is More Important Than the Law!

UKTUBAR met with a number of bank chairmen and Gulf businessmen to explore their views regarding the law and the measures needed to achieve the goals for which the law was promulgated. All agreed that the timing chosen by the Egyptian leadership for the issuance of the law is excellent. The choice of timing indicates the leadership's awareness and its desire for the success of the law and the achievement of the benefits it will hopefully bring. 'Ali Sultan al-'Ali, the chairman of the board of directors of the Habib Qatar International Currency Exchange Company, who deals with Egyptian banks daily, believes that the political climate in which the law was issued is good by all measures, inasmuch as there is an Arab reaching out toward Egypt at all levels, popular and official, because of the honorable position of the Egyptian government and people regarding the Gulf crisis.

'Ali Sultan smiles before saying: I hope that I will not anger anyone if I say that the political position, not the law, is what is pushing Arab capital toward the Egyptian market. The Arabs' confidence in the Egyptian leadership and the rational line that it is pursuing regarding the crisis is moving is propelling them toward having confidence in the Egyptian economy and investing in Egypt.

At the same time, as a banker, I can say that the law is an important step. However, the state's general policy is a cornerstone in the attraction of capital and investments. Beyond that, a change is needed in bank operating methods. There must also be a change in some of the conceptions of some employees in the Egyptian banking system. Efforts should be made through various channels to end government red tape in Egypt to keep pace with the developments now occurring in Egypt's economic sectors.

'Ali Sultan indicates that these matters no doubt require time, because it is impossible to change human concepts overnight. However, he is confident about the future, because Egypt is now moving on the right road.

Husayn al-Fardan, who is participating in a number of investment projects in Egypt, and is the chairman of the board of directors of the al-Fardan Financial Group in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, agrees with the opinion of 'Ali Sultan al-'Ali. He adds: Everyone was waiting for this law. As chairman of a group that engages in transactions worth millions of dollars with the Egyptian banking system, I believe, logically that this law is an encouraging, excellent step. However, by itself, it is not enough. It must be followed by other steps to encourage and attract Egyptians, before Arabs and foreigners, to deposit their funds and investments in Egypt. I maintain this view because, through my position, I know that there are many Egyptians, especially those working in the Gulf, who keep their funds in international banks. The time has come for the return of these funds to Egypt. That will not occur unless new means to attract these funds are created, such as increasing interest rates in banks and granting many incentives to investors in different fields.

As for Arab investors, they view the current conditions in Egypt as good and suitable for investment, especially in light of Egypt's courageous position regarding the Gulf crisis and the fraternal, friendly, noble concepts stressed by President Husni Mubarak from time to time, which have placed Egypt in the forefront and opened the door widely to the flow of Arab capital to Egypt.

However, at the same time, al-Fardan states that the Egyptian government must inspire confidence in investors regarding the long-term future of their investments, and it must guarantee investors freedom to transfer the earnings from their projects, or even their capital, abroad whenever they wish to do so, without any restraints in the future.

The law, al-Fardan stresses repeatedly, is good. However, there must be tireless, continuous efforts to change the concepts of some who are in charge of banking activity in Egypt. Here, al-Fardan is not referring to the senior administrative level because, as he stresses, it is at the highest level of adequacy and awareness and cooperates with investors personally for the most part. He is referring to mid-level and junior-level employees and the

need to eliminate some currently existing negative phenomena in the banks, such as backups at the tellers' windows and so on.

The Egyptian government must also act, using all channels, to end some negative aspects that still spoil the investment climate in Egypt. If all of that happens, Egypt can expect to witness shortly an enormous flow of Arab capital to it, because investors will have no reason to keep their funds with Swiss and American banks.

A Change in Banking Thinking is Required

There is no doubt that the application of the banking account confidentiality law in Egypt entails as many advantages as it does burdens and responsibilities on employees in the banking system, because the spirit and letter of the new law require these employees to change many of the concepts based upon which they operated for many years. Al-Fardan adds that the creation of new technological means will facilitate the work flow in banks with the required confidentiality stressed by the new law. However, the important thing initially, according to Mustafa 'Abd-al-Wahab, the deputy director of banking facilities in the al-Qatari Commercial Bank, is the need to change banking thinking, so that a bank teller, for example, understands the notion of accepting any sum from a client, depositing it under a specific number, and obtaining from the client only a number and a signature for the purpose of endorsing subsequent withdrawals from the numbered account.

Mustafa believes that the new law must apply only to deposits, so that no depositor who has a secret account can be permitted to obtain loans guaranteed by that account. That would serve to avoid the disclosure of information pertaining to that account when there is an exchange of information between banks, which is done under the auspices of the Central Bank, especially information regarding credit risks.

Mustafa also believes that the application of this system of regulations should be carried out in stages. Thus, the first stage would be restricted to the opening of confidential accounts in foreign currency. Also, the use of computerized systems in Egyptian banks should be universalized, and the use of the magnetic card system for withdrawals, signature matching, etc. should be expanded. This system currently exists in most Egyptian banks.

Ahmad Hanafi, the director of the Islamic Gulf Investment Company in Qatar, agrees with Mustafa 'Abd-al-Wahab's view regarding the need to change current banking thinking in Egypt. He adds that this change must embrace all bank employees, from the most junior employee to the most senior official at the top of the ladder in our banking system. These employees should be trained in methods that ensure confidentiality, the philosophy of the new system, and the legal rights of clients, because any error made by a bank employee could lead to legal problems with clients.

Bank employees should also be trained in the use of electronic systems designed to ensure complete confidentiality, such as devices that operate by [the entry of] numbers, and voice-recognition devices. Ahmad Hanafi believes that the selection of several bank branches in which to apply the new system initially will help guarantee its success. Confidential accounts require special service, inasmuch as treatment of clients would vary depending on whether the client holds a current, regular deposit account, or a secret account, regarding which the minimum amount must be set at a high level. It is also necessary to determine who will benefit from this system. For example, will they be investors, businessmen, merchants, etc.? There also should be a guarantee of freedom to transfer secret accounts abroad and domestically. At the same time, appropriate controls must be established to ascertain the cleanliness of these funds. In other words, it is necessary to determine that they have not been used to finance illegal activity, such as drug dealing, smuggling, etc.!

However, Mustafa 'Abd-al-Wahab believes that such controls might upset secrecy requirements. The numerous risks of confidential accounts, which could be used by persons involved in illegal activity, such as money changing and drug deals, must not be a justification for taking an excess of measures that would impair the confidentiality of bank accounts.

He sees a need to apply the system as it is applied abroad, with both its negative and positive aspects, as long as we are trying to attract funds to our banking system!

If that happens, he expects an abundant flow of capital to Egypt in the near future, especially if interest rates are increased, even if only slightly over current rates.

The Banks' Role Regarding Investments

After the application of the account confidentiality law, Egyptian banks should begin to reexamine their investment role. Ahmad Hanafi also believes that the national economy will be served by granting the banks freedom to invest a portion of the funds that will become available to them after the application of the law in large, carefully studied, profitable projects. The banks can enter into such projects alone, or jointly with existing economic units, or Arab and foreign investors who enter the Egyptian market for the first time.

The banks must also play a positive roll in stimulating investment in Egypt by encouraging investors to enter into new projects which the banks promote and for which they provide the necessary financing.

There is no doubt that the final goal of the account confidentiality banking law is not solely the mobilization of funds, as Dr. Nabil Hashad states, but the use of these funds in the best possible way.

The sound investment of these funds will promote development at a rapid pace, enable the establishment of many new productive projects, and provide employment

opportunities to hundreds of thousands of unemployed, especially those who have returned recently from Kuwait and Iraq.

The new law will lead to an increase in the volume of deposits remitted from abroad through the banking system, in view of the degree of trust that depositors can enjoy under the new law. Also, the slight difference between the prices of foreign currency in the banks and in the black market will lead many depositors to keep their deposits in the banks in hard currency.

There is no doubt that the integration of the dreams of mobilizing savings domestically, attracting foreign savings, and soundly investing all of these funds, will lead to the addition of new production units, which will grant the Egyptian economy additional resources to help it to compensate somewhat for its losses due to the Gulf crisis.

Summary

The summary is that the decisions required of the government after the issuance of the bank account confidentiality law are more important and serious than the decision to apply the law itself!

The law, as investors and bankers in the Gulf stressed, is an important step in the right direction. However, by itself, it cannot achieve all of the goals hoped for. Other numerous steps must be taken to create a suitable climate that will help achieve these goals.

The agencies concerned with investment in Egypt must make efforts to provide ways that will guarantee the creation of a suitable climate for the investment of a large portion of the funds that are expected to flow through the banking system in the near future. They can do so by cooperating and coordinating with Egyptian banks, which have an important role in this regard, be it to promote new investment projects and encourage investors to enter them, or to provide the necessary financing for such projects.

Agencies concerned with investment must now exploit the positive climate that prevails in Egyptian-Arab relations. They must also create suitable, objective circumstances, so that benefit can be derived from the capital that is beginning or will begin to flow to Egypt in the near future.

The Federation of Banks of Egypt, in cooperation with the Central Bank of Egypt and other banking system units, should organize ongoing training seminars for employees in banks, so that they can absorb the new law's philosophy and technique. I would not be exaggerating if I said that this law has placed the banking system on the threshold of the 21st century in terms of thinking, attitudes, and operating scope. Those working in the Egyptian banking system must rise to this challenge!

IRAQ

Bush Compared to Hitler

91AE0027A Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic
10 Sep 90 p 4

[Article by 'Ali Khayyun: "Who Resembles Whom? George Bush a Stubborn Hitler!"]

[Text] As part of a calculated psychological war, George Bush and his allies are trying to apply certain malicious labels to the Arab leader Saddam Husayn.

In his August 30th interview with the president and leader [Saddam Husayn], the American journalist Dan Rather reported that George Bush is trying to convince others by comparing the president and leader to the person of Hitler. The president replied with a question:

"From which angle did Mr. Bush choose to compare me to Hitler?"

Although the American journalist explained by saying, "because you have attacked a weak neighbor," the reality is completely different. This label, which recalls to Western minds the person of Hitler, whom many knew as contemporaries, is merely intended to prepare minds for the end that history witnessed when the Allies united to oppose Hitler. If we bear in mind that Hitler was a military man influenced largely by the ideas of his contemporary geopoliticians who spread the idea of lebensraum for Germany, the comparison is in no way allowable or applicable to an Arab leader striving to liberate usurped land that the entire world agrees was polluted by Zionism and working to defend his country's revival against real or potential foreign attack.

The label in question applies completely to George Bush as well as to the leaders of the Zionist entity, not to the president and leader. The president exposed this mendacious procedure in his August 21st letter to George Bush. He mentioned that the President of the United States, "Is with clearly motivated innuendo comparing Iraq and its representative to Hitler. He is forgetting that all these labels apply to himself. Iraq has not assembled its fleets and airplanes to attack America and Europe. It is President Bush and those who have rushed toward the abyss with him who have assembled their ships and airplanes and have come as aggressors to our region. Having violated sacred and holy places, they wish to kill people and strip them of their humanity. Is there any doubt that these labels apply to President Bush, when he is striving to kindle a war that may burn up the whole world? Can anything be more telling than his refusal to take any of our initiatives and solutions seriously, either relating to the root of the problem or to the subject of the foreigners who are a result of the original problem?"

So spoke the president and leader, exposing the miserable and malicious attempt of the President of the United States. It may be important for us here to inform Iraqi, Arab, and international public opinion that the

intended comparison was applied to the president and leader even before the Kuwait affair. The president immediately realized what was happening as part of a calculated campaign against Iraq and alerted Arabs and Muslims to what Zionism was doing in cooperation with America in this area.

On 18 June 1990, in his speech to participants in the People's Islamic Conference in Baghdad, the president and leader disclosed an important document published in America—the proceedings of a conference held in the United States. The president said to those in attendance:

"Today I read a document I believe was submitted on the 17th of this month, June (24 Dhu-al-Qa'dah). It summarizes the proceedings of a conference in the United States attended by 1,200 American Jews."

The president and leader went on to read selections from the document. Among the things he said about it was the following:

"The document speaks about Saddam Husayn and says that he, like Hitler, is a danger to the world and to humanity, as well as a danger to the Iraqi people. Just imagine: they are very concerned about the welfare of the Iraqi people!"

Saddam Husayn spoke plainly, exposing the enemy's malice and deriding their malicious claims. All this happened before the Kuwaiti affair.

The president and leader went on to say:

"The document then specifically mentions guaranteeing defensible borders for Israel in light of what such borders mean in the wake of Iraq's increased military strength. Who then can be described as Hitler?"—the president and leader continues: "If a comparison is allowable, who is it who resembles Hitler?"

"Wasn't Hitler the advocate of lebensraum? Wasn't he the person who expanded on the basis of that idea and collided with many? This talk is about lebensraum. It calls for safeguarding borders that are not the ones that Israel claims today, but rather ones that can be defended on the basis of what was said to be Iraq's increasing strength."

The president and leader then revealed that the leader of the Democratic majority in congress had said in a speech, "The current condition in the world is more dangerous than before in the age of Saddam, who has succeeded in uniting the ranks of the Arabs."

Commenting on these words, the leader [Saddam Husayn] said that the one who had united the Arabs was not Saddam, but rather the Arabs who united [two lines illegible in source].

The document and the occasion reveal an indisputable truth, the essence of which is that America was preparing to launch an attack against Iraq on any pretext and was

out to occupy the Arabian Gulf. This is confirmed by another expression that occurs in the document:

"The real confrontation in the world, one that will be like a third world war, will be in the Middle East between the Arabs and Israel, supported by America and its allies."

From this text we deduce that America is resolved on aggression to eliminate Iraq's increasing strength for the sake of the Zionist entity and that if war comes, it will come with the support, planning, and urging of the Zionist entity itself.

Thus, we see that the Arabs who have fallen in behind America are making a great strategic error, because they have not put together the links in the conspiracy that began when Iraq emerged victorious from the eight-year war [with Iran], announced that it had mastered science and technology, and warned the Zionist entity that it would receive its just reward if it ever attacked Iraq or any Arab country.

The Arabs and the world must therefore realize that the Kuwaiti problem is of no great interest to America, except as an excuse for aggression and the clandestine implementation of schemes to place the Arabs under occupation. Otherwise, America, Britain, and the other Western countries know by referring to documents kept in their respective ministries that Kuwait was part of Iraq and that those who were ruling it were a small, corrupt family whose life was an object of jokes and scorn in the West—a bad example of the "oil Arabs" and their scandals, which even Gulf Arabs themselves used to deride in their well-known plays.

The question now is who will have victory in the struggle.

On what will the leader [Saddam Husayn] rely in his absolute, announced confidence in achieving victory?

The first principle that Iraq and its leader Saddam Husayn follow is that the aggression did not surprise us at all. As the president and leader indicated in his June 26th speech, "We must expect savage attacks from forces hostile to the nation's revival. As you see, the attack has begun. We predicted this attack at the Oman summit of the Cooperation Council last February. At that time it was a pure prediction based on deductions, even though it was accompanied by certain tangible bits of evidence. Now, however, this attack has become clear."

The president and leader was referring here to the propaganda attack and deliberate distortion of the facts. The "bits of evidence" have now become a great deal of evidence. The links of the attack have become complete, with weapons, fleets, and airplanes, and have been tightened with Arab conspirators from traitorous regimes.

Having predicted and reckoned on such a force, should we be afraid of it?

The president answered this question in his June 18th speech. He said:

"They want to frighten us with threats and warnings. How can we fear anyone but God, who is praised and exalted? Whoever is in the right, God is his help. Is it allowable—can you accept that we should fear?"

This confidence is also the product of correct analysis and a comprehensive view of the conditions of the Arabs, their nation, and their security and the designs against them.

The strength of Saddam Husayn is the strength of the Iraqi people and of the aroused Arab people. God forbid that the Arab leader who is obsessed with the idea of protecting the land of the Arabs should be compared to an adventurer in war!

Let us read an excerpt from a speech by the Arab leader Saddam Husayn and then judge what a zealous leader he is. In the same speech to which we have been referring, he explains his concept of Arab national security as follows:

"If Israel ever strikes Syria while Hafiz al-Asad is its ruler, we shall not hesitate to respond to Israel."

Continuing, the president asked, "Do the covetous ones want to divide Arab security?"

"Whoever seeks to divide Arab security only wants to injure and harm the Arabs, like those who seek to divide Arabness from Islam. Dividing local security from overall security is a direct injury. It is malice aforethought against the Arabs. At a time when they are giving Israel more arms than the total effect of all the Arab arms taken together, they proclaim that local security has to be isolated from Arab security. What does this mean, if not defeat?"

This is Saddam Husayn's concept of Arab security. What does "Traitor of the Two Holy Mosques" Fahd say? And what does "Guardian of the Americans" Husni Mubarak say?

After this, is it right to compare the zealous Arab leader with anyone else?

After the attack by America and its allies on Arab lands and holy places, who is the occupier who can be compared with Hitler?

This is the question, and that is the reality.

Turkish Party Leader on Gulf Crisis

90ES0048Z *Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish*
23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 Sep, 1, 2 Oct 90

[Article by Democratic Left Party General Chairman Bulent Ecevit: "Baghdad's Pulse"]

[23 Sep p 15]

[Excerpts] The first time I went to Baghdad 12 years ago, I saw a somewhat run-down, not-very-sure-of-itself city. I thought I was going to see a completely devastated city this time because Iraq had fought a hard war in the intervening 12 years.

Twelve years ago, I found myself in a militaristic city in Baghdad. The guest house where I stayed was under tight military protection. The two-room suite assigned to me at the guest house was guarded by two tough-looking soldiers who stood like statues, with swords in their hands. The way they guarded the door was to stand with their long swords crossed, and every time I went through the door they would draw to attention, clicking their heels sharply, open the cross to allow me to pass and then recross their long swords. This made me nervous about leaving my rooms.

With Iraq just over an eight-year war with Iran and now inexplicably on the verge of war with the whole world, I expected an even more militaristic atmosphere and eastern severity in Baghdad this time.

What I encountered was just the opposite.

In the 12 intervening years, Baghdad had become a very beautiful city with wide boulevards, highways, neat and spotless sidewalks, harmonious buildings, and trees and grass everywhere.

I found an Ottoman saying that would never have entered my mind on my previous visit 12 years ago frequently running through my mind this time: "There is no friend like a mother, no place like Baghdad."

This time, we were quartered in one of the modern guest houses built adjacent to the presidential palace the 1980's for visiting foreign heads of state and government. There were neither soldiers nor police anywhere near our guest house, not inside, not in front, not on the grounds.

We have grown accustomed to seeing a policeman or a soldier at every step in Ankara, Istanbul, or any other of our cities. Yet, this time we encountered almost no one in uniform on the streets of Baghdad except traffic policemen.

And traffic itself was so orderly as not to require traffic policemen anyway.

The people were going calmly about their business. Everyone stays in his home or shop in the sweltering oven-like heat of the daytime, but with the cool air of evening enhanced by the swaying palm trees acting as fans, people move about comfortably or bring out chairs and sit in front of their homes or shops, watching the passing scene.

They seem to be living in a corner of the world that is worlds away from war.

TRT and Iraqi TV

I get sick of watching the nightly speeches, ground-breaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies, and lengthy interviews—sometimes four or five in one night—by our president, prime minister, and ministers on our news shows on TRT [Turkish Radio and Television Administration] broadcasts. I was prepared for totally state-controlled, totally propagandized news reports on television in an Iraq on the brink of war.

However, if President Saddam Husayn received one or two high-ranking foreign guests or delegations that day, they are given three to four seconds on the evening television news in Baghdad, followed by brief reports on important internal and foreign news.

What one sees on the television screen other than news programs are nature documentaries, frequently including Cousteau's deep-sea adventures, Japanese children's series, English and American series subtitled in Arabic—"Love Boat" is a favorite—or other films.

When we entered the waiting room at President Husayn's headquarters, uniformed guards were watching a Japanese "Heidi" on television.

Countries on the brink of war usually broadcast a lot of marches and militaristic programs on radio and television. Yet, everywhere we went in Baghdad, the televisions and radios were always on, but we did not hear a single march or see any militaristic programs the whole three days we were there.

We noticed, however, that a lot of Iraqi TV time was given to demonstrations held in Baghdad in reaction to President George Bush's speeches aimed at the Iraqi public. One probably must consider this natural.

We had seen reports and pictures in some western newspapers indicating that the Iraqi leaders were living in fear of a sudden attack or a coup or an assassination attempt, that they were never seen in public for this reason, and that Saddam Husayn was operating out of an underground shelter. However, Saddam Husayn received us in a small house in the middle of the city with kittens playing on the front lawn and hardly any guards visible.

Protection at the Peoples Army Headquarters, where we held our first meeting with First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan, the number-two man of the administration, had not been exaggerated either. Even in the halls and lobby of the large tourist hotel where he gave a dinner for us that night, Taha Yasin Ramadan moved comfortably among the crowds consisting mostly of foreign journalists and television people, without feeling the need for any visible protection.

When I went to Moscow last April, I saw long lines in front of almost every store or shop selling basic needs, and Moscow was not under embargo. In the capital city of embargoed Iraq, however, I saw no lines except bread lines at the bakeries.

Surprisingly Calm

I was quite surprised by all this.

Are the Iraqi government and people used to living in danger and a climate of war from the eight years of the Iran-Iraq war? Are they adequately protecting themselves against the possibility of a war that they may soon face with the whole world, or are they trying to give the impression that they are safe? Or don't they take the possibility of war seriously? Do they think that the crisis has turned the corner and come to a dead end and that a peaceful solution will be reached sooner or later, or are they trying to give the impression that they believe this? Perhaps all of these possibilities have a particle of truth.

I went to Baghdad 12 years ago for official talks as prime minister. In my talks with Saddam Husayn and his working colleagues during that trip, a climate of confidence between two neighboring countries was prepared, and the first steps were taken toward economic cooperation.

I did not go to Baghdad in any official capacity this time. It did not enter my mind to assume the role of mediator. This was impossible anyway, as anyone who puts on a mediator's hat must have a close relationship with both of the opposing sides. But I have no relationship, contact, or dialogue even with our own government, much less the governments of the Middle Eastern countries preparing for war with Iraq. I am general chairman of a party, the Democratic Left Party, but we are considered "nonexistent" by our own state and government because we are not represented in the Assembly. Even though our views are broadcast occasionally on American, Soviet, British, German, and Scandinavian radio and television, we are considered "nonexistent" by our own country's radio and television. The TRT used to send photographers to some of our meetings occasionally, but the film they took seems to have gone into the film morgue for the documentaries they broadcast after statesmen die, which is probably why they sent their teams in the first place.

This time I went to Iraq only for an observation tour arranged by MILLIYET. Since I am both a politician and a journalist, on such an observation tour I was to emphasize either of these two hats, depending on circumstances and opportunities, or to give each equal weight.

En route to Iraq, I did not know how I would be received or with whom I would be able to talk. But when presented with the opportunity to go to Baghdad, which is on the brink of war, and Amman, which is standing on the edge of it, I could not reject it regardless of my capacity or function. It was depressing to me to be forced to approach the crisis and problems right on our doorstep in the light in which the Western media hold them and to look at them through U.S. or West European spectacles. Indeed, as a politician, journalist or citizen of a country as much Middle Eastern as European, this situation was a disgrace to me.

Even though, while in Turkey, I was forcing myself to use every opportunity to avoid looking at our region through the eyes of nonregional countries, still I was desperately feeling the need to go to the focal point of the crisis in the Middle East and be able to see what was going on from there.

I therefore accepted MILLIYET's offer without the slightest hesitation.

It Could Even Have Been a Vacation

On Monday, 17 September, my fellow reporters assigned to cover our departure from Ataturk Airport in Istanbul, as their jobs require, asked why I was going to Jordan and Iraq. Since I did not yet know the details of the schedule, I said, "Would you believe it if I said I was going on vacation?" Of course, they said no. Certainly, I did not have vacation in mind, either, but when I saw the surprisingly calm climate and atmosphere of safety in green Baghdad and the swimming pool outside the beautiful guest house reserved for us, I said to Derya Sazak and Bulent Kicyilmaz, my MILLIYET traveling companions, as a person who had not been able to go on vacation or had the chance to go swimming for years, "I was joking when I said that in Istanbul, but I could certainly take a vacation here." However, our schedule was so tight that I did not even get to use the pool once.

Some of our distinguished columnists seemed at a loss about my taking such a trip, since they could not tell whether I was going to Baghdad and Amman as a journalist or a politician. I was equally nonplussed by their confusion because I had served in this double capacity before. I had, for example, taken a trip through some of our southeastern provinces a year ago under the auspices of a magazine and written my impression of the trip. Later I had written my observations of a trip to Moscow for a large newspaper and, just recently, wearing my journalist hat I wrote my eastern Black Sea observations for another large newspaper.

Reasons Must Be Known

As I pointed out at the beginning of this article, I found Baghdad quite advanced since 12 years ago, but I saw that the Iraqis are not quite so sophisticated in the concept of public relations known as "PR."

Thus, they are pretty backward in explaining their own case to world public opinion.

So world public opinion, and Turkish public opinion also, still do not really know why Iraq invaded and annexed Kuwait and why the Iraqi administrators refuse to withdraw from Kuwait even though practically every world state, including the superpowers, is standing against them, and the great powers have their tanks, aircraft, armored vehicles, artillery, and troops trained on them; world and Turkish public opinion still do not know, even though it has been as long as a month and a half since the crisis erupted.

Iraq's reasons for this attitude may or may not be considered valid, may or may not be considered legitimate. But if finding a peaceful way out of the crisis is desired—is truly desired—it is necessary to know those reasons and to know them in detail. [passage omitted]

I am not pro-America, or pro-Iraq, or pro-Kuwait; I am pro my own country; I am pro-Turkey. If Turkey is in any degree a democratic and pluralist country, I have no obligation to be in favor of the government. I am in favor of the Turkish nation according to my own interpretation. I think I proved that I can look after the good of the Turkish nation in the periods when I bore the responsibility of the state in the past at the cost of having practically the whole world turn against us.

We could neither have lifted the ban on poppy cultivation, nor launched the Cyprus Peace Operation, nor put our national rights in the Aegean on the agenda without risking world opposition. Of course, we were both safeguarding our sovereign rights and bearing in mind world circumstances and balances in taking those risks. [passage omitted]

[24 Sep p 11]

[Text] Iraq endangered both itself and the entire world with its invasion and annexation of Kuwait on 2 August 1990.

If Iraq had invaded and annexed Kuwait during the cold war when the East-West standoff was still in effect and the Soviets and Americans were in competition for superiority, not just in Europe but in the Middle East as well, it would still have encountered some hardships, but it would not have been isolated and backed into a corner as it has been today. It could perhaps have gotten away with the invasion and annexation by using the East against the West and pitting the United States and the Soviet Union against each other in the Middle East. And the cold war between East and West may have prevented the possibility of a hot war in the Middle East that would jolt the whole world.

Perhaps the Iraqi administration did not think that the Security Council would vote unanimously for such stringent sanctions in response to an invasion the way it has for the first time in UN history; perhaps it did not think that almost the whole world except for a few small Arab countries could achieve a solidarity unequalled in history against it; but the Iraqi administration probably knew that in 1990 when the cold war was over, it could not get away with anything by pitting East and West, United States and Soviet Union, against each other; that it would be opposed by the oil-rich Arab countries in the Middle East and that the United States, which still has not withdrawn its warships from the Persian Gulf even though it has been two years since the Iran-Iraq war ended, would amass troops in the Middle East with the support of the Western countries at least, if not the Security Council. No matter what anyone may say, the Iraqi administrators are realistic enough to have figured that out.

Even if Iraq felt the invasion to be necessary from its own standpoint and was able to rationalize it, it probably did not expect the world to be silent or not to react to such an incident, because there are many countries that could have invaded their neighbors if it were acceptable for the strong to invade and occupy the weak by force of arms.

So why did Iraq invade Kuwait in spite of all this? Why did it take the calculated risk of such an act?

A peaceful solution to the crisis in the Middle East cannot be found without understanding the reasons behind Iraq's behavior.

To Understand Is Not the Same As Approve

To understand does not mean to be understanding. To know and understand the reasons for some behavior does not require excusing that behavior, but if it is necessary to diagnose disease in order to treat it, it is equally necessary to know the reasons behind a problem or crisis in order to resolve that problem or bring the crisis to an end.

Iraqi Economy Collapsing Without Embargo

The world now sees the economic embargo as the only way to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait without war. It is hoped that this embargo will eventually cause the collapse of the Iraqi economy and therefore force Iraq to its knees. However, it seemed that Iraq's economy was heading for collapse even if it had not invaded Kuwait and made the whole world angry, or if the embargo had not been imposed.

The Iraqi economy suffered heavy losses during the eight years of war with Iran and had a foreign debt load that would not be easy to pay off as a result.

It is therefore not easy to frighten Iraq with embargo. Iraq might have been prevented from invading Kuwait by listening to its complaints and demands, not by backing it into a corner.

Bill for Eight-Year War

Iraq's war-related foreign debt is estimated to be at least \$70 billion.

Also, Iraq says that between 1981 and 1990 the Gulf countries were always raising or exceeding the production ceilings set by OPEC, thus keeping prices down, and that this cost Iraq \$89 billion in lost revenues.

Iraq's oil production dropped drastically during the eight-year war. Iraq figures its losses for that reason at \$106 billion.

Meanwhile, Iraq paid \$102 billion for the war equipment and materiel that it purchased abroad during the eight-year war with Iran. This figure does not include other civilian and military expenditures incurred because of the war.

Kuwait was constantly expanding its borders at Iraq's expense while Iraq was at war with Iran, according to Iraq's claims, to the extent that it shifted a border gate between Iraq and Kuwait more than 70 kilometers. That is, it essentially occupied 70 kilometers of Iraqi territory. Moreover, Kuwait conned Iraq out of \$2.4 billion in revenues by operating oil wells belonging to Iraq in Rumaila, in southern Iraq. Iraq describes this as a "robbery."

Kuwait and the other Gulf countries did not stop there. Let alone accepting Iraq's and Iran's requests to raise the oil price to \$25, the Gulf countries increased production, effectively reducing the oil price that OPEC had set at \$18 in 1987 to \$11.

Every \$1 decline in the price of oil per barrel costs Iraq \$1 billion a year. Thus, Iraq was losing \$7 billion annually because of the reduction in the oil price from \$18 to \$11.

All of these things together had brought the Iraqi economy to the point of a serious collapse. The Iraqi administration had been seeking ways for months to avoid this collapse and expected the Gulf countries to be understanding about this.

[25 Sep p 11]

[Text] I explained in yesterday's installment how and why the Iraqi economy was heading for collapse.

Iraq needed two things to avoid the collapse of its economy:

1. Let the oil-rich Gulf countries divide fairly with Iraq the foreign debt burden it had taken on because of the war!
2. Let production quotas be tightened and the oil price in the Middle East be raised over a specific time period to \$25, letting it stabilize at that level!

Iraq considered itself justified in making these requests.

For the major oil importers had already considered it natural that oil prices would rise to the \$25 level in about two years.

Moreover, this would have affected the Soviet Union, a large oil producer, as it would have helped the Soviet Union with its foreign exchange bottleneck, enabling it to make strides toward "perestroyka" (restructuring).

And then, the West would have been saved from too great a burden in rescuing the Soviet economy.

"Bravo Capitano" Method

The rationale behind Iraq's call for its debt load to be divided fairly with the Gulf countries was this:

Iraq fought the eight-year war with Iran on behalf of all Arab countries in the Middle East, not just itself.

The desire of the Khomeyni regime in Iran to spread its own "revolution" to all Middle Eastern and Islamic countries was at least as scary to all of the gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as it was to Iraq.

Fundamentalism in Iran was also alarming for the Soviet Union, because if Iranian fundamentalism influenced the Muslim countries in the Soviet Union, it could cause a great deal of trouble for this large power.

So the world, and especially the Gulf countries, owe Iraq a debt of gratitude for this war which badly weakened the Iraqi economy and in which hundreds of thousands of Iraqis lost their lives, but which at the same time weakened Iran.

Under these circumstances, Iraq expects the rich oil producers of the gulf to consider the loans they gave Iraq for the war as "aid" and erase them from their account books.

There was nothing terribly unfair in this, because the gulf countries applied the "bravo capitano" method to Iraq in a way. That is, they egg Iraq on in the war and say, "Go to it," but behind its back say, "Bravo capitano," and go on with their fun, as in the famous Italian story.

They did not stop at just having fun, they made a lot of money on this eight-year war. The \$106 billion that Iraq lost because it had to reduce its oil production owing to the war, became extra earnings for the wealthy Gulf countries that increased their oil production, or rather for the pockets of the ruling families of those countries. They also spent these extra earnings on their own harems and luxurious lifestyles unequaled in history, not on the poor Arab and Islamic countries.

Moreover, these countries not only refused to turn Iraq's war loans into "aid," but also reduced oil prices to \$11, leaving Iraq with its back flat against the wall.

Iraq might have been swept into economic collapse or even starvation under these circumstances.

Saddam Husayn's Warnings

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn expressed this concern, or a warning stemming from this concern, at a summit meeting of the Arab countries in Baghdad on 30 May 1990, that is, two months before the invasion of Kuwait, using these words:

"War is sometimes fought with soldiers, and damage is sometimes caused by bombs, casualties, or coups, but damage to the economy can sometimes be equally devastating. This behavior (which causes heavy damage to our economy) is a kind of warfare against Iraq. If we could stand it, we would continue to tolerate this kind of behavior. However, we cannot stand any more pressure."

Receiving no comprehensible answer to this open warning from the Gulf countries, Saddam Husayn spoke

even more plainly when he received Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Hisham Nazir on 9 July:

"I cannot stand helpless and allow the Iraqi people to go hungry and Iraqi women to go naked."

This, too, produced no result, and Saddam Husayn escalated the warning to a threat in a speech on 16 July 1990, or two weeks before the invasion of Kuwait. Using an Arab expression, he said, "Rather than cut off our daily bread, let heads be cut off."

In fact, Iraq was making these warnings and threats only after pushing frequently for a solution to the problem through negotiation and obtaining no results at all.

Comments such as "at the end of our rope," "helpless," and "starvation" or the description of the economic pressures on Iraq as "a kind of warfare" were not words to be taken lightly or accorded no credence.

And adding "rather than cut off our daily bread, let heads be cut off" was a clear omen of the invasion two weeks before it took place.

Goof or Trap?

Under these circumstances, who would believe that some of the Gulf countries, the United States or the U.S. intelligence organization, the CIA, did not predict the invasion and were caught unawares?

A top intelligence officer at the CIA said immediately after the occupation, "We know how many skivvies Saddam Husayn has, but we do not know in advance what he will do tomorrow morning." Even a child does not believe such comments in our day and age.

Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United States undoubtedly knew that Iraq, considering itself and describing itself as "helpless," had reached the point where it could see no other "help" than invading Kuwait and intended to do so. But they pretended not to know.

They wanted Iraq, or the Iraqi administration, to fall into the trap of invading Kuwait so they could destroy it, not just back it into a corner. They were going to jump on Iraq as soon as it invaded Kuwait.

However much of a gaffe or a gamble Iraq's falling into that trap would be, to knowingly push Iraq into this trap is equally as bad.

And now it is still not clear whether Iraq fell into the trap or, as Saddam Husayn claims, whether America or the 100,000-plus American troops in the Arabian desert fell into it.

I will continue with the reasons behind Iraq's behavior in tomorrow's installment.

[26 Sep p 11]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted]

Iraq Landlocked, Has Border Problem

Having summarized Iraq's complaints and demands earlier in our series, we now come to its aspirations regarding the Persian Gulf and its border problem.

During and after World War I, Britain and France drew artificial and vague borders in the desert sands in parceling out Ottoman territories in the Middle East, expecting the Arab countries in the region to be in perpetual conflict with one another.

Britain later divided Iraq and Kuwait into two separate states as it was withdrawing from the region.

Iraq, which on the basis of certain historical facts considers Kuwait a part of its own territory, opposed the existence of a separate state of Kuwait from the beginning.

Iraq's historical claims and rationales in this regard are certainly debatable.

Nevertheless, looking at the map one clearly sees that the British were extremely unfair to Iraq in defining the border between Iraq and Kuwait, deliberately squeezing this large country into a corner at the tip of the Persian Gulf with tiny Kuwait and leaving it landlocked.

Iraq has a short strip of beach on the Persian Gulf consisting of useless swamps on the Faw Peninsula. The triangular segment formed by the incursion of the sea into Iraqi territory is mainly swamps.

Thus, the Gulf is essentially closed to Iraq. Moreover, Iraq's tiny gateway to the Persian Gulf was virtually locked and relocked by giving Bubiyan and Warbah Islands to Kuwait.

As if this were not enough, American and British warships sent to the Gulf supposedly to protect the Gulf countries from possible attack by Iran during the Iran-Iraq war, maintained their presence in the gulf after the war ended. Thus Iraq found itself being totally backed into a corner and threatened in the Gulf.

Because of the obstacles to its access to the Gulf, Iraq had to build pipelines over Turkey and Syria to the Mediterranean and over Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea and send most of its oil abroad in this way. But disagreements with Syria made the pipeline that passes over that country unusable.

What Iraq Needs to Avoid Drowning in Gulf

Being boxed in and squeezed into a corner as if to be drowned in the Persian Gulf brought Iraq face to face with great difficulties and dangers from the standpoint of both economic relations and security.

To avoid this squeeze, Iraq has been asking recently to at least shake loose the key locking it into the tiny corner that could give access to the sea, the key formed by Bubiyan and Warbah Islands belonging to Kuwait. He is

asking that he be given the use of these islands even if the islands themselves are not given to him.

But Kuwait will not even discuss it.

Wants Discussion of Iraqi Border Problem

Meanwhile, as I pointed out earlier, the borders marked off in the desert sands between the two countries are very vague. Iraq claims that Kuwait is always taking advantage of this uncertainty to expand its own territory at Iraq's expense. In fact, with faits accomplis during the Iran-Iraq war, Kuwait shifted a border gate between it and Iraq 70 kilometers to the north, sank oil wells in the Rumaylah region belonging to Iraq and "stole" both Iraqi territory and Iraqi oil, i.e. its national wealth.

For that reason, Iraq wanted talks to solve the border problem with Kuwait but could never get a positive answer from Kuwait.

Lost Hopes and Invasion

Iraq had been saying for months that it considered all these acts by Kuwait "the equivalent of war and aggression" and that it could no longer tolerate the situation, and when no positive response was forthcoming to its efforts for solution by negotiation, it invaded Iraq [as published] on 2 August 1990.

Even after the invasion, Iraq consented to discussion of the problem at a summit meeting, but the summit was blocked. It was only after these hopes were finally dashed that Iraq converted the invasion into an annexation.

Overlooked Fact

There is one fact that has been overlooked in this regard. Jordanian King Husayn drew attention to this fact for the first time during an extremely interesting and important address to the American people on CNN television on 22 September.

No leaders of Iraq, ever since the Iraqi state was formed, have accepted the existence of Kuwait as a separate state, but have insisted on keeping the need for Kuwait to be attached to Iraq on the agenda, based as I pointed out earlier on certain historical grounds.

Iraq has advanced this claim during various regimes and governments. Among those most strongly advocating this claim were pro-Western, even allegedly Western-puppet statesmen such as General Nuri al-Sa'id.

The first and only Iraqi leader who made no move—until 2 August 1990—to add Kuwaiti territory to Iraq and who was content only to request that the border conflicts between the two countries be finally resolved through negotiation and that Iraq have access to the Persian Gulf for security purposes was, as King Husayn rightly recalled in his CNN speech, the present leader, that is, Saddam Husayn.

However, when Kuwait turned a deaf ear to even this moderate approach from the present Iraqi administration, it was this same Saddam Husayn who carried out the annexation of Kuwait to Iraq.

Where did a tiny, militarily-weak country like Kuwait, a country so small and weak as to allow occupation of its territory within just a few hours, get the confidence, the power and support, or encouragement, to turn down Iraq's invitations to solve their problem through peaceful negotiations?

The country that encouraged Kuwait in this tough behavior had to be the United States.

In fact, U.S. Congressman Jim Leach, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, appeared on the TV screen immediately after King Husayn's speech on CNN on 22 September and said that the United States considers all of the rationales advanced by Iraq to be invalid. Jim Leach thought that King Husayn had not sufficiently denounced the invasion and even blamed King Husayn for considering Iraq justified in the complaints and demands it had made prior to the invasion.

The United States is caught red-handed with these comments by a member of the Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee.

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait certainly cannot be condoned, regardless of its motivation. Once the precedent was set for the strong to gain its rights by invading the weak, there would be no end to it.

But there can be no peaceful solution to the problem until a prejudice-free and understanding approach is taken to Iraq's motivation, that is, its complaints and demands prior to the invasion.

[27 Sep p 11]

[Text] I have tried to explain in detail in earlier segments of this series what kind of complaints and needs Iraq had before it invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990 and annexed it a few days later.

I pointed out as my own view that these complaints and demands could not be considered completely unjustified, but in doing so I did not excuse Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait.

Despite this, some writers still insist on interpreting the ability to see some justification in Iraq's complaints and demands prior to the invasion as approval of the invasion.

Seeing Pre-Invasion Demands Unjust Not Needed to Denounce Invasion

Suppose a man went into his neighbor's garden while his neighbor was away from home taking care of some problems, added some of the neighbor's garden to his own, sold vegetables from the garden, and put the money in his pocket. He also does some other things to harm the

man's income and food supply. Moreover, he builds his own garden wall across the man's gate and stands in front of it, refusing to open it.

When the man returns home, he knocks and knocks on his neighbor's door and says, "You invaded my garden, sold my vegetables, and used up my food supply. You are also trying to imprison me in my own house. Let's sit down and talk about these problems and find a solution." Nevertheless, his neighbor turns a deaf ear to these invitations. Instead, he goes to his strong and powerful big brother and, backed up by him, says, "No, we have nothing to discuss."

Readers of the earlier segments of our series will probably agree that there is not much difference between this and the situation between Iraq and Kuwait before 2 August 1990 and that Kuwait acted the same as the neighbor in this analogy.

However, one certainly could not have approved his behavior if the man in this situation had gone into his neighbor's garden and home and thrown him out instead of trying other methods of persuasion, trying to gain support by explaining better the unfairness he had encountered and the justification for his complaints and demands or going to court. For if it were approved, it would lead to vigilantism in the whole area, that is, obtaining right by might or even going beyond right, and this would cause turmoil in the whole area.

Therefore, such an act of occupation certainly could not be condoned. However, disapproving and denouncing invasion does not require that the complaints and requests made prior to the invasion be unfair.

However wrong it may be to interpret my finding Iraq justified in some of its pre-invasion complaints and requests as condoning the invasion, I think it is equally wrong for those who justifiably denounce the invasion to say that the complaints and requests that Iraq made before the invasion are totally unjustified without properly examining them.

It is not only wrong, it is risky, because adopting such an attitude would block the way to finding a peaceful and just solution.

A Bird in the Hand

Certainly, finding a peaceful and just solution to the problem requires persuading Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

However, in trying to persuade Iraq of this, it is necessary to bear in mind the difficulties Iraq will experience in withdrawing from Kuwait and to seek ways to overcome those difficulties.

My impression from various discussions in Baghdad is that the main reason for the Iraqi administration's reluctance to withdraw is this:

—Iraq, faced with opposition from the whole world following the invasion and annexation and also at the point of strangulation by the economic embargo that included even food and medicine, has tried to rectify the conflict with its former enemy, Iran, in order to give itself some breathing room and to secure its eastern border. It has returned to Iran the small strip of land it kept at the end of the eight-year war and has agreed to share the Shatt al-'Arab with Iran, drawing the border through the middle.

Thus it has given back to Iran everything it was still holding at the end of the eight-year war.

When Iraq added the Shatt al-'Arab to its own country during the war, it obtained for the first time a secure access route to the Gulf. However, the annexation of Kuwait gave Iraq easy access to the gulf from Kuwait even though the Shatt al-'Arab was then entirely within its own borders.

It believed it had adequately provided for its economy and its security in this way.

As I understand it, the Iraqi administration is thinking this way:

—We added Kuwait to our own territory to guarantee our access to the gulf and so we gave back to Iran whatever we were still holding from the eight-year war. We were prepared in that context to sacrifice the security the Shatt al-'Arab gave us. If we suddenly give Kuwait back to the Sabah family, won't we have given up a bird in the hand for two in the bush? What can we say to our people under these circumstances if they ask us: "Then why did we fight with Iran for eight years? Why did we sacrifice hundreds of thousand of soldiers? Why did we suffer millions of dollars in losses, and why did we invade Kuwait to bring the whole world against us?" How will we answer to that?

Of course, the Iraqi administrators are not expressing these concerns and difficulties in so many words; but when what they have said is all put together one may easily see that this is the impasse at which they find themselves and that they are resisting withdrawal from Kuwait for that reason.

By giving back to Iran everything they had gained in the war after invading and annexing Kuwait, they see themselves, like Tarik bin-Ziyad, as having burned their ships and say, "There is now no turning back from Kuwait for us."

I think that this is the concrete reason behind the rhetoric that Saddam Husayn uses by drawing on historical rationales or, as he often does, invoking the name of Allah and speaking of sacred soil and Holy War instead of speaking openly, the real reason for his refusal to withdraw from Kuwait.

Nevertheless, even if the Iraqi leader has burned his ships like Tarik bin-Ziyad, if he can be provided with

new ships, perhaps he can be persuaded to turn back, that is, withdraw from Kuwait.

Conditions for Being Persuaded to Withdraw

However, to do this it is necessary to bear in mind without prejudice the complaints that Iraq was expressing for months prior to its invasion of Kuwait and seek solutions for them, and also to carefully avoid giving the impression that it is being forced to withdraw from Kuwait under threat and pressure of nonregional states.

It is also necessary to take up Middle Eastern problems with an approach that is different, more modern, more comprehensive, more peaceful and more realistic and fair than has been the case to date.

Tomorrow I shall explain my thoughts on how such an approach may be formulated.

[28 Sep p 14]

[Text]

Democracy Debate with Saddam Husayn

Those who read the lengthy summary of the minutes published in MILLIYET on 22 September of our meeting with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn will have discerned, I think, that he is an intelligent person who cannot easily be backed into a corner.

Even if he is much more emotional in public addresses and uses a religious and mystical style, especially recently, he was wholly consistent and logical in our private conversation, taking care to avoid self-contradiction.

It was different, however, when I suggested a democratic solution to the Kuwait problem, as Saddam Husayn gave evasive answers.

I asked him: "You say that you have no problem with the people and that the family governing Kuwait does not represent the people; if so, why can't you consent to letting the people determine the future of Kuwait by way of a referendum?"

I said that since Kuwaitis make up less than 1 million of Kuwait's 2 million population, that is, they are in the minority, not just Kuwaitis but Arabs who came from other Middle Eastern countries and settled in this country and are deprived of citizenship rights even if they were born and grew up in Kuwait ought to participate in this popular vote, including Palestinians also.

Saddam Husayn did not reject such a democratic procedure in principle, but said that democratic rules cannot work in a war climate and that even countries where democracy is firmly rooted have suspended certain democratic processes in wartime.

I gave an example from our own recent history to discredit this excuse. I explained that Ataturk had

worked with a National Assembly in which everything was freely debated during the War for Independence and that the war had gained political legitimacy in world public opinion in this way.

Saddam Husayn could not give a convincing answer to this but did not reject the need for a democratic solution in principle. He said that he saw Iraq's future in democracy, but added regretfully that the steps they had begun to take in that direction had to be postponed because of the recent crisis.

Fourth Category

I also suggested the democratic option for solution in my long conversation with Iraq's number-two man, First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan.

Taha Yasin Ramadan in turn pointed out that certain regimes in the Middle East are outmoded, especially the Gulf countries which are governed by privileged families without any input from the people and where elections are held in family assemblies. He said:

"Ruling powers have three bases for legitimacy. They take their legitimacy from either religion, military force, or the people. However, the ruling powers in certain Middle Eastern countries do not get their legitimacy from any one of these three."

I said, "That means those countries have a fourth category of power."

Taha Yasin Ramadan, usually a solemn person, laughed a little and after citing the regimes that can survive only with the support of Western states, said, "Yes, but the fourth category is about to end." He also said that these countries would be very late in gaining a government that derives its legitimacy from popular support.

"This will probably come about as the democratic process begins to work in the Middle East," I said.

But Taha Yasin Ramadan said that the regimes we had called the "fourth category" would never permit the democratic process and that solution could not be found that way.

That leaves the possibility that these regimes will be overthrown either by use of force from outside or by popular uprising. Or to be more precise, the Iraqi administration cannot seem to envision any other solution.

However, I think the important thing is that Iraqi leaders do not oppose the democratization process in principle but are content to suggest that there are certain obstacles to it stemming from concrete circumstances.

Word "Democracy" on Agenda for First Time

Some interesting developments occurred right after our meetings in Baghdad and Amman.

Jordanian King Husayn appeared on CNN television on 22 September in an address to the American people in

which he stressed—for the first time as far as I know—the need for the democratic process to begin in the region.

"The governments of all countries in the region must be encouraged to move rapidly and in orderly fashion toward democracy, and this must be a democracy in conformity with world standards in which every citizen enjoys equal rights and in which human rights are granted, exercised and respected," he said.

I had mentioned this topic to Crown Prince Hasan in Amman on 20 September as we were returning to Turkey. But King Husayn's speech had been prepared before 20 September, on 17 September, and Prince Hasan gave me the text of the speech with the request that it be kept "secret for the time being."

That is, the Jordanian administration had reached the conclusion on its own before I broached the subject in our Amman meeting that it is necessary to seek solutions to Middle Eastern problems within the democratic process.

Iraqi President Saddam Husayn also made room for the first time for the problem of democracy in a one-hour-and-16-minute speech to the American people via CNN television on 26 September. He criticized the support by the United States, the defender of democracy and human rights throughout the world, for supporting the most outmoded regimes which have the least respect for human rights and are the farthest from democracy, describing it as a great contradiction.

The development giving me the most hope is that the idea of seeking a solution to the problems of the Middle East by means of the democratic process was brought to the agenda in this way recently before world public opinion and especially before the American public by two important regional leaders.

Everything Starts With Words

Doubtless this idea has only been spoken at the moment. Although Saddam Husayn mentioned this idea for the first time the other day, he has suspended the modest steps he had begun taking towards a transition to democracy in his own country. Any steps taken towards democracy in Jordan, meanwhile, are still quite limited.

However, the important thing is that two influential Arab leaders have recognized the need to talk about democracy, though it remains only talk for the time being. All trends of thought and political trends start first with words and gradually gain concrete form and life.

The winds of democracy and openness that have engulfed and shaken the world in recent years have not so much as fluttered a leaf in the Middle East. In my opinion, therefore, it is an encouraging development to feel a breeze of democracy to cool, albeit just a little, the heat of the crisis.

Western Leaders Do Not Talk of Democracy in Middle East

If democratic Western countries are going to continue intervening in Middle Eastern problems, they must at least be careful that this intervention is consistent with their own democratic principles.

In the first stage of doing this they must give up their accustomed way of life of artificial respiration and force of arms, and encourage the outmoded regimes in certain Middle Eastern countries that we described as the "fourth category," that is, not founded on any one of the known bases of legitimacy, to modernize and take steps towards democracy.

However, even though some Middle Eastern leaders have brought democracy to the agenda in this period of serious crisis, not a single word has been heard from either U.S. President Bush or the other democratic Western leaders about the need to begin the democratization process in the Middle East.

The United States, which entrusts the defense of democracy and human rights to no one else, is insisting on returning the Sabah family to its position in Kuwait at the cost of dragging the world into the fire, and there is no way it can claim that it is doing this for democracy.

Not Fantasy

If a modern solution is to be sought to the crisis and muddle of problems in the Middle East at a time when openness and democracy are sweeping the world, it can begin only with steps to open the way to democracy.

I know how hard it is for the Middle East to open this way under present circumstances. But if this difficulty is not risked it will make it that much harder to solve the Middle East's problems and bring peace and tranquility to the Middle East. And the whole world will suffer until peace and tranquility come to the Middle East.

Beginning the democratic process in the Middle East may seem a fantasy at this time. But wasn't beginning the democratic process in the Soviet Union, Romania, or Bulgaria a fantasy until just a short while ago?

Certainly it is difficult to initiate the democratic process under the shadow and threat of arms, and in that context of foreign armies hundreds of thousands strong, or of the stockpiling or possibility of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in certain regional countries.

However, if it was possible to alleviate this difficulty between East and West, it can be overcome the same way in the Middle East.

All it takes is the desire! Especially the desire of the nonregional states insisting on interfering in the Middle East! And all it takes is preventing the arms industries of these countries from making the Middle East crisis into a sweet source of gain!

[29 Sep p 14]

[Text] Regions bubbling with the threat of war used to be called a "powder keg." We still sometimes use this term for the Middle East out of habit. Yet the Middle East is now a region where weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, leave the gunpowder era far behind.

Therefore, the eruption of a large war here could set the whole world on fire, cause a great deal of suffering, and even throw the world economy out of kilter.

In fact, markets are in turmoil without actual war, but only the trappings and talk of war; oil prices had gone down to \$11 before the crisis erupted, but rose to \$40 within a few weeks.

Chemical and biological weapons are being described as the "nuclear weapons of the poor," because they can be manufactured cheaply in almost every country, but are as harmful to humanity as nuclear weapons.

Not just the "nuclear weapons of the poor" but real nuclear weapons are widespread in the Middle East, however.

No one doubts that Israel has an alarming nuclear arsenal acquired through great technological advances it has been able to make both with American support and on its own.

It is known that chemical and biological weapons are plentiful in Iraq, which is on the verge of having the ability to produce nuclear weapons.

Iraq used the chemical weapons that it developed with the aid and technology of the Western countries, now gnashing their teeth over him, against Iran and also its own Kurdish citizens in recent years.

A few years ago Israel managed to send an air strike to destroy the facilities that Iraq was preparing to use to build nuclear weapons. Now Iraq is clearly saying to Israel:

"I can now respond if you attack us again."

Israel knows that this is true. Israel, which could once read the riot act to all the Arab countries, is now crouched silently in its corner against the Iraqi threat.

It is no secret, either, that Libya has a quite sophisticated chemical warfare industry, developed in recent years with the technological aid of Westerners, now gnashing their teeth over this country also.

Everyone seems to want a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Middle East, but no one has yet taken one step toward peace.

A climate of trust in the region is necessary for a peaceful solution. And a climate of trust depends only on the removal from the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East area of all weapons of mass destruction under

effective international supervision. But there is neither a tendency nor any step in this direction.

West's "Panorama"

On the contrary, it is not enough that the Western industrial nations have fed the Middle East's arsenals of mass-destruction weapons for years and continue to do so covertly even during the embargo, but they are fanning the flames of war by massing their own troops, aircraft, artillery, armor, and all kinds of war technology in the area.

"Panorama," a documentary broadcast on British BBC television, described through the words of high-level witnesses with ironclad proof and in the BBC's tradition of objective journalism, the contribution that Western industrial countries have been making for years to the mass-destruction weapons industry in Iraq. It was explained that while the embargo is in place, including even medicine and baby food, certain firms in Western countries are continuing these contributions to an extent by indirect routes.

Among these Western countries are the United States, Britain, Germany, and France.

While these countries are now trying to pressure Iraq on the one hand, they lose no time making excuses for one another on the other.

While the United States, for example, is confident that it can detect the slightest military movement in Iraq with its AWAC's, or airborne radar, it is panicked that the AWAC's may be disabled by new technology that France sold to Iraq. It is appealing to its friend and ally and quick partner in embargo, saying:

"Teach me the technology you sold to Iraq that disables my airborne radar, so I can find a way to keep this technology from becoming useless."

France, however, is turning down this request from its friend and ally, the United States.

Another fact that everyone knows and the Soviet Union confirms is this: Iraq has some sophisticated weapons that it bought from the Soviet Union or produced with Soviet technology. Iraq needs the Soviet technicians in its country in order to use those weapons, but the Soviet Union, which is now acting in harmony with the United States in almost everything and is conscientiously applying the embargo against its former friend Iraq, is not about to pull those thousands of military technicians, experts, and consultants out of Iraq yet, and the United States is being "understanding" about this.

It is very hard to believe in view of these conflicts and inconsistencies that the West and the Soviet Union really want peace in the region.

Are Arms Industries Fanning Crisis?

Western arms industries have been plunged into crisis and brought to the verge of bankruptcy by the destruction of walls and the thaw between East and West, the destruction of both blocs' nuclear arsenals, and the agreement to reduce other weapons rapidly and extensively.

People can't help but wonder:

"Are the arms industries, threatened by bankruptcy, encouraging the crisis in the Middle East?"

The United States had been selling only limited quantities of weapons to the Gulf countries in the Middle East prior to the crisis under pressure from the Israeli lobby. However, Israel is no longer objecting to the sale of billions of dollars of sophisticated weapons to the Gulf countries because of its fear of Iraq. However, it is saying: "Increase the weapons given to me." Both the United States and other western countries are accepting all arms orders from both the Gulf countries and Israel.

The western countries are largely able to balance off their losses deriving from the rise in oil prices and military build-up in the Middle East as a result of the crisis by the arms industries' growing sales.

Soviet Union Profits From Crisis

The Soviet Union is trucking along also. Its economy was in serious trouble before the Middle East crisis. It could not overcome the foreign exchange shortage and was unable to take steps toward "perestroyka," the restructuring of its economy.

However, when oil prices climbed from \$11 to \$40 because of the crisis, it opened the way to perestroyka for the Soviet Union as one of the world's largest oil producers, and the USSR began to take concrete steps in that direction.

According to American experts, every dollar rise in the oil price raises Soviet oil revenues by \$2 billion a year. In this case, it is clear how high the Soviet Union's foreign exchange income will be even if oil prices do not stay at \$40 but fall back to \$30-some.

One Soviet problem is the backwardness of its oil production technology and the age of its facilities. It was not getting the support it needed from the West in this regard. However, following the Middle East crisis, the West is now ready to give the Soviet Union all kinds of technological aid to improve its oil production.

It seems rather clear, therefore, that the economic embargo against Iraq is affecting only the economies of less-developed or developing countries, countries that have no oil wealth or advanced arms industries, countries such as Turkey and Jordan for instance, but is causing no serious damage to the large and wealthy.

Divide and Conquer

Moreover, the nonregional large powers and industrial countries have been using the "divide and conquer" technique since the early part of this century to set the Middle Eastern countries against one another to keep the region in constant crisis and tension, thus in need of them for security. By doing so, they keep the spigots of the Middle Eastern oil wells in their own hands.

At any rate, Western countries had already taken a ruler to draw artificial and unbalanced borders in the desert sands in the process of dismantling the Ottoman Empire, while envisioning constant clash and friction among the Middle Eastern countries and an occasional localized war to keep them busy.

In short, the nonregional states which have never kept their noses out of the Middle East, certainly do not seem to want a war large enough to get them in trouble, a war exceeding the dimensions of a localized war, but they do not seem to want lasting peace and security either.

Only Regional Countries Can Ensure Peace

However, the regional people cannot have peace, the change of structure and order needed to keep up with the times in the Middle East cannot occur, and no advances can be made in democratization as long as peace and security are lacking.

Since the West and nonregional states cannot be expected to provide peace and security, the regional countries—the people and the leaders—must take up leadership in this regard directly.

I always tried to stress this while I was in Baghdad, especially in newspaper and magazine interviews, that is, every chance I could get to speak to the Iraqi people. I proposed that all regional countries, from Libya, Israel, and Syria to Iraq, strive for an agreement, under UN supervision, to rid the region of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Some "realists" may consider such a proposal a dream, a utopia beyond even dreaming about in the current climate of serious crisis in the Middle East.

However, not very long ago, just five years, before Gorbachev assumed power in the Soviet Union, it would have been considered an impossible dream and a utopia for East and West, the United States and the Soviet Union, the NATO and Warsaw Pact members to get together and agree to rid their own countries and regions of nuclear weapons under effective supervision.

But that dream has come true today.

And along with this dream's coming true began the change from the bottom up of the outmoded orders of East Europe and the Soviet Union, the democratization of repressive regimes and the freedom of the people. All of these changes are taking place with incredible speed.

Why shouldn't a similar process begin in the Middle East?

Why should the people of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, the cradle of modern civilization, of Western philosophy, Western culture, and all monotheistic religions, be condemned to live in the past; why should they count it their fate to live deprived of democracy and freedom, deprived of peace and security?

Deafening Silence

It is Israel's duty to facilitate steps taken in this regard. The Arab and Islamic countries are now fully committed to coexistence with Israel. And if Israel is committed to seeking the security it deserves within the region, not outside the region, I think that ridding the region of all weapons of mass destruction and allowing the conditions for lasting peace to form would greatly facilitate that.

On our way home from Baghdad, we had a long meeting with Crown Prince Hasan, a modern statesman. This was the topic on which we spent the most time.

Prince Hasan explained an interesting memory. He had attended an international conference in 1985 at which an Israeli minister was also present. He had spoken of the possibility of nuclear weapons in Israel. Prince Hasan said, "I would not have been surprised if I had been roundly criticized for my comments. What really bothered me was that my comments were received with a deafening silence."

The tiny voice of Jordan is not enough to break this "deafening silence." But why shouldn't Turkey, the strongest country in the region, Turkey, which is a European-Middle Eastern country that could make the whole region, and the whole world, listen if it wanted to, be the first to raise its voice to break that "deafening silence"?

Wouldn't Turkey provide a tremendous service to itself, to the entire region and all humanity if, instead of calculating how "the structure or map of the region will change if a war breaks out in the Middle East, so let's get in on the ground floor and get our share of the spoils," it were to raise its voice for ridding the region of all of those horrible weapons and, while steps were being taken to do that, for all nonregional countries to withdraw their own weapons from the region?

Those who refused to heed such a voice raised by Turkey, such a concrete call for peace, if there were any, would condemn themselves, all humanity and history.

[30 Sep p 14]

[Text] Iraq is facing an international solidarity unequalled in the history of mankind. On the one hand, there is the embargo severing its economic relations with the world, and on the other the United States, the most powerful country in the world, is conducting a military build-up on a scale that this region has never seen and, not only that, but other western countries and certain

Arab countries have added their troops to it. The Soviet Union, which has now joined hands with its former enemy the United States, is pressuring its former friend Iraq to "withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait."

Can Iraq stand up to all this, or will it soon be brought to its knees?

Saddam Husayn talked tough in our meeting in Baghdad:

"We are not a nation that falls to our knees and kisses the feet of anybody who opposes us... We would tolerate a lot of self-sacrifice for the sake of peace, but if they try to bring us to our knees, we will take off their heads before we are destroyed," he said.

Where does Saddam Husayn get the confidence to talk like this?

Iraqi Embargo May Last Long Time

Certain visible indications show that Iraq may bear the economic embargo for quite a while. There is no serious food shortage in Iraq even though it has been about two months since the crisis began. Apparently they have a pretty large food supply. They have developed their agriculture and animal husbandry in recent years.

Their complaints about Turkey in connection with GAP [Southeast Anatolia Project] are not very serious and seem to have been largely solved. The dams, lakes, and canals that we flew over seemed fuller than ours.

Saddam Husayn says, "We are preparing ourselves to withstand this blockade for years." Other Iraqi officials with whom we talked also said, "We will stuff our bellies with dates if necessary."

A problem exists at present only in medicines and baby food. We saw that the medicine cabinets were quite empty when we visited a children's hospital in Baghdad, and we learned that babies are dying for lack of medicines. In a way the world is paying the price of Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait in newborn babies.

Mothers who bring their babies to the hospital are asked to supply breast milk for their babies since a milk shortage has begun.

The only lines we saw in the market were for white bread. There seems to be no other major shortage at the moment.

Certain Western reports of soldiers being so hungry they are eating zoo animals seem to be imaginary. The butcher shops we passed were as well stocked with meat as our own. As for fruits and vegetables, we saw no indications of a shortage. Moreover, their homegrown fruits did not leave us wishing for home.

The Baghdad market looked a whole lot better than Moscow as regards staples.

I do not know Iraq's status as regards industrial inputs and spare parts. No doubt Iraqis will have some difficulty from that standpoint in time. But it does not look as though they will go hungry.

At any rate, American experts, too, do not expect the economic embargo to hurt Iraq for nine or even 12 more months.

Can America Hold Out?

So, can U.S. President Bush be expected to wait nine or 12 months? Can he risk making American troops, which it is understood will reach 200,000, wait for nine or 12 months in the vast expanses and heat of the Arabian deserts, not just thousands of kilometers but hundreds of years away from the way of life to which they are accustomed? Even if Bush risks it, will the mothers, fathers, and wives in America stand for it?

If it is necessary to wait nine or 12 months to start getting results from the economic embargo, and if the American administration and public will not put up with waiting that long, the United States and other countries amassing troops in the Middle East may try war as a second option to bring Iraq to its knees.

Can War Work?

Undoubtedly the units amassing against Iraq in the Middle East are quite superior to Iraq's from the standpoint of equipment and technology if not troop strength.

But the strong do not necessarily win wars nowadays.

The United States, the most powerful state in the world, was defeated in Vietnam in a war of many years duration by a country much weaker than Iraq and, moreover, a divided country. But not only that, it was also pushed into internal crisis because of that war.

Another large power, the Soviet Union, was forced to pull out of Afghanistan in the face of years of resistance by the mujahidin, who were divided among themselves and far inferior as to level of training and military technology.

For small countries may have certain advantages over big ones in modern warfare.

Old Wars-New Wars

In the past, the sides would first declare war against each other, then line up their soldiers in opposite ranks with rifles and bayonets pointed at each other, and enter the fray to the playing of pipes and trumpets. The side with superior numbers and guns had the best chance to win.

It is not like that now.

The difference between the large and the small in military power nowadays is like the difference between a tiger and an insect. The tiger is certainly so superior in strength as not to be compared to a tiny insect, but it is

not that easy for the tiger to kill the insect. In contrast, a tiny poisonous insect can sting the tiger and bring it down.

Saddam Husayn takes confidence from this and says that America may begin a war, but it will not be able to finish it and, moreover, that the war will not be limited to Iraqi territory.

It would be well to remember what he told us in this regard. He said during our meeting, "They may try to create a pretext to strike against us. In fact, they talk about striking and settling our business in a few hours. But who says we will agree to a war that would end in a few hours? We just fought an eight-year war. We will fight five or six more years if we have to. We know America is the number one superpower in the world, but we are confident that we can also do damage to America."

In later addresses to America and world public opinion, he gave examples showing how he could hurt America and even the whole world. For example, he said that he could destroy the oil wells in the region by burning them. He doubtless also has in mind other hit-and-run-type actions, other kinds of sabotage, and underground resistance methods.

One doesn't have to be a fortune teller to think that a man who would risk an eight-year war and hundreds of thousands of casualties for nothing would not hesitate to drag the world into disaster while destroying himself and his country.

Human Disaster Before War Even Begins

In fact, haven't millions of poor people who are not at fault or have no responsibility whatsoever for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the Middle East crisis left the countries where they have been working far from home for years, leaving behind all that they have accumulated by the sweat of their brow, and fled in streams from Kuwait and Iraq, not knowing where they will go or how they will make a living, and been turned back by Saudi Arabia?

In short, tragedy has already struck millions of people. While the earnings of some countries are mushrooming, such as the United States from arms sales and the Soviet Union and Gulf states from higher oil prices, and while the Iraqi people are suffering many shortages, millions of Palestinians, Egyptians, Jordanians, Yemeni Arabs and millions of Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Filipinos and, for that matter, thousands of Turks, are condemned to unemployment and poverty.

Poor little Jordan, with its 3 million population, is being forced to shelter and feed hundreds of thousands of helpless people who do not know where to go under the uncaring eyes of the rich countries.

If quick results are not obtained from the embargo and the option of getting results by war is chosen, the whole

world may be shaken by even worse tragedies devastating millions of innocent people before the war even begins. Moreover, no one can say when and how a war risking the cost of such tragedies would end.

So is there any solution other than embargo or war?

Certainly there is.

And that is to strive to reduce the tension and end the crisis and to seek peaceful solutions to Middle East problems through dialogue and negotiation.

But the sides are already set in stone. Neither of the sides is making the least effort toward compromise.

Former U.S. President Carter issued a call for compromise to be tried, but President Bush is paying no attention. Even some of Iraq's staunchest supporters among the Arab countries are telling Iraq, "Withdraw from Kuwait." But Saddam Husayn is not paying attention either.

A mediator for dialogue and compromise is needed.

Perhaps Turkey could have taken on the mediator's function; but it has lost that opportunity with the official stance it has adopted.

Unfair to Jordan

As far as I can see, that leaves Jordan as the only country that could serve as mediator at this stage. In fact, Jordan's King Husayn has been running here and there, crossing seas and continents, trying to explain that he would love to serve as mediator. But the American administration and the Saudi Arabian administration are angry at Jordan and suspicious of it. For although Jordan is incensed, really and truly incensed at the invasion, it is avoiding breaking its ties with Iraq and wants the complaints and desires that Iraq expressed prior to the invasion to be heeded in an effort to seek solutions through negotiation.

And that is why America and Saudi Arabia do not trust Jordan.

Nevertheless, Jordan is the country that is suffering most from the crisis. As I said, despite its weak economy, it has to look after hundreds of thousands of people fleeing Iraq and Kuwait via Jordan. Tiny Jordan—with Iraq on the east, Israel on the west, Syria and Lebanon to the north, and Saudi Arabia to the south—is squeezed between these five squabbling countries. Moreover, more than half of its population is Palestinian, and the Palestinian people are so helpless they have pinned their hopes on Saddam Husayn's Iraq. Jordanian children are even holding demonstrations to protest the babies dying from lack of medicine in Iraq. The fundamentalists, meanwhile, are ready to rebel against the administration.

The Jordanian economy does not have a lot of agriculture and industry. Jordan keeps its economy going on trade and the foreign exchange that Palestinians in

Kuwait send back to their families in Jordan, and now it has lost these opportunities. Foreign trade and the transit trade have all but stopped, and most of the Jordanian Palestinians in Kuwait have returned jobless and helpless.

Under these circumstances, isn't it unfair and cruel to Jordan, which is just trying to get the sides to compromise, to be angry and distrustful because it has not broken off dialogue with Iraq?

[1 Oct p 16]

[Text]

Jordan and Royal Family

We stayed in Amman one night en route to Baghdad and one day on our return from Baghdad.

At first glance, as far as one can tell from Amman, Jordan is one of the most modern countries in the Middle East, despite its poverty. Certainly I do not know all the Jordanian people, but the people of Amman, more than the people of any other Middle Eastern Arab country, call to mind the people of a western country in appearance and culture. English is widespread. Jordan's capital looks like a small American city with its beautiful homes set in orderly lawns and its clean, tidy streets.

Jordan has begun to take steps towards democracy lately. After a long interval, it has seated a parliament following elections that could be called free. However, the field of opposition was left to the fundamentalists because the elections were called without giving the secular parties the opportunity to recruit members. Therefore, Jordan's regime, which may be called secular in practice, is faced with an internal threat fanned from outside.

And I explained yesterday the serious problems Jordan faces because of the present crisis.

Modern Arab Prince

I did not meet with King Husayn. The king was not in Jordan when I was passing through Amman. However, I had the chance to talk to my old friend, Crown Prince Hasan.

Our invaluable Ambassador Okday Aksoy, who met us when our flight from Baghdad landed in Amman around noon, received a telephone message: Prince Hasan was at the palace, expecting the ambassador and me.

Prince Hasan is a cultivated and modern Arab prince. He keeps himself well-informed and is always accompanied by young and competent experts. He is always studying regional and world problems in depth with them, has situation reports drawn up on every significant event, debates the reports with others and, clearly, helps his elder brother, King Husayn, with a steady flow of information and opinion.

The palace is very modest by Middle Eastern standards.

Following our long conversation in his office, Prince Hasan invited us to join him for the family meal. We went to a fountain in a corner of the garden. There he introduced us to some of his experts and a few young princesses. One of the princesses was Prince Hasan's daughter. She attended a British university where she studied the Turkish language and literature. She said that her grandmother speaks fluent Turkish, but they sometimes have difficulty understanding each other's Turkish because her grandmother's is more Ottoman Turkish.

The beautiful princesses were simply dressed and apparently were brought up in a harmonious mixture of Ottoman family manners and the manners of a cultured European family. These princesses served the food at the table where we all sat down together with a naturalness bearing no trace of affectation, like the well-brought-up daughters of a modest family.

We continued to discuss world and regional problems with the prince and his experts while we ate.

You know the kindhearted princesses and fairies in the fairy tales? Well, I felt that I was in the middle of a fairy tale. But it was a fairy tale consistent with modern times and the real world.

The Jordanian royal family, in any case, is a world away from that of the extravagant and bejewelled outdated kings, sheiks, and emirs of the Gulf states with their crowded harems and fast cars, and this difference is reflected in Jordan's social structure, culture, and regime.

Prince's Rebuke

The Jordanian leaders apparently find themselves quite close to Turkey, with both their Ottoman-influenced customs and traditions and their modern way of thinking and lifestyle. That Prince Hasan's daughter studied the Turkish language and literature is an indication of this.

However, if the prince finds himself close to Turkey, he is equally offended by the present Turkish administration. The royal family is extremely hurt that Turkish president Turgut Ozal is one of the foreign leaders who has been most derogatory of the Jordanian administration in the recent crisis.

As soon as we had taken our seats in his office, the prince turned to our ambassador and expressed his disappointment in the Turkish president.

Ozal had made certain speeches in which he criticized Jordan so severely as to border on a threat, had implied that the public demonstrations in Jordan were put-up affairs, and had claimed that the king of Jordan had prior information that Iraq was going to invade Kuwait but had not warned anyone.

However, these claims were not true. When Iraq went for months without getting answers to its calls for seeking solutions to problems through discussion, it made its intentions clear enough that everyone could understand

them in the days before the occupation. The difference between the Jordanian administration and many other countries' administrations was that the Jordanian administration assessed the sounds issuing from Iraq more realistically.

Broken Tradition

We have an old tradition. If a serious situation affecting us occurred somewhere, the Turkish prime minister and foreign minister would arrange a meeting with the Turkish ambassadors in the countries of the region and evaluate the situation. Because our foreign service officers are well trained, the government would find such evaluations useful in setting policy.

However, President Ozal, who now virtually conducts Turkish foreign policy, apparently is not interested in the information and views of regional Turkish diplomats, even on topics concerning our own region, and does not even show them as much consideration as he does the views of the U.S. President or American television news reports.

No one would infer from this comment that our ambassadors have complained about this!

After hearing the objective and comprehensive information provided by both our Baghdad Ambassador Sonmez Koksai and Jordan Ambassador Okday Aksoy and their colleagues about their host countries, I asked whether the Turkish government had called a meeting on the recent crisis with our regional ambassadors. I could not help but feel sorry when I learned that no such meeting was held.

If such an assessment had been made, it may be that the president and the government would have looked at the situation in the Middle East from the standpoint of the regional countries, not just the nonregional great powers; would have adopted a better, more balanced stance; and would not have led the way to certain unnecessary tensions in the region.

[2 Oct p 16]

[Text] If, God forbid, a big war breaks out in the Middle East, the West will be fighting for the outdated order they themselves created in this region against the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish administration and for their own oil interests.

And what about us, what will we be fighting for if we join this war, and for whom?

We had no oil problem in the Middle East. We had taken care of our own oil needs with the Iraqi pipeline across our country and, besides, we were making a profit on this and getting our oil cheap.

As opposed to certain other Middle Eastern countries, Iraq had never tried to export "revolution" to us, had not attempted to infiltrate us and take over our educational institutions and key public officials or to divert us from the secular and democratic republic regime, had

not made territorial demands on Turkey, and had not been a bedroom for terrorists trying to divide Turkey.

Moreover, our economic relations with Iraq had been developing constantly to the benefit of both countries for 12 years. Despite heavy economic difficulties it suffered as a result of the eight-year war with Iran, Iraq was careful to pay its bills to Turkey on time.

Meanwhile, even if they complained about water, I do not think Iraqi leaders were as concerned about this issue as was thought. In fact, they never mentioned water in our long discussions. At any rate, as I pointed out earlier, they seem to have largely solved their own water problems inside their own territory.

Iraq has no intention of attacking Turkey. It would be foolish for Iraq to risk such an attack, leading the way to NATO involvement.

So what is it that we cannot exchange with Iraq that the government is getting the power from the Assembly to send troops to certain regional countries against Iraq or permit the deployment of foreign military powers on our own territory, as if it were not enough that we complied with the UN Security Council's economic embargo resolution before anyone else and in a tougher way than anyone else. Why is Turkey being dragged towards a war climate from day to day?

Not Our Duty to Guard Order Formed to Oppose Us

Is it our duty to volunteer to be the guardian and protector on behalf of the Western states of the artificial states formed through a thousand and one intrigues to offset the Turkish administration when the Ottoman Empire was being dismantled, of the artificial boundaries drawn with a ruler in the desert for the purpose of keeping those states constantly at one another's throats, and of the outdated regimes ensconced at the heads of some of those states, of regimes, moreover, that are trying to drag Turkey down with them? Is it our duty to send troops to the Arabian desert for this purpose?

Certainly we do not admire the Iraqi regime. Certainly we cannot approve the actions that Iraq has undertaken against certain regional countries. But why should we fight with Iraq?

Whoever it was who formed an Iraqi state, troubled from birth by being landlocked though having an opening to the sea, whoever it was who—primarily the United States and other Western countries—brought the Saddam Husayn administration in Iraq to the point of being able to send military satellites into space, and whoever it was who enabled Iraq to have long-range missiles, "doomsday sticks," let them be the ones now to take measures against the threat which they think may come from Iraq to their own oil interests in the Middle East and the outdated regimes they assigned to guard those interests; let them not try to draw us into paying the price for all this!

More American Than America

I cannot understand why we should be more American than America on the economic embargo.

In Baghdad they told us the names of some ships. These ships had sailed with cargoes of human necessities such as medicines, baby food, and foodstuffs that Iraq had bought from some Western countries before it invaded Kuwait and the United Nations imposed the embargo, and they put in at Mersin Harbor a few days after the embargo resolution. However, we would not permit these ships to discharge their cargoes, which had been paid for by Iraq, because "the embargo began."

In contrast, although ships loaded with Iraqi oil for the United States at our ports at the pipeline terminals, also prior to the invasion and embargo, arrived at their American destinations after the embargo was imposed, the United States unloaded these ships and happily used the Iraqi oil.

America is an oil producer itself and would not have suffered if it had not unloaded the Iraqi oil that reached its own ports after the embargo, but infants, children, and sick people are dying in Iraq because the medicines and baby food on the ships that we would not permit to unload could not reach Iraq.

Expectations of Turkish President

I was hoping the Turkish president, who attended the "Children's Summit" at the United Nations in America, would explain to world public opinion the unfairness of an embargo on medicine and baby food and that this is just as despicable as using chemical weapons. But in America Mr. Ozal did not discuss such human problems that primarily concern children, but the role that Turkey will play with America in the Middle East.

I also hoped the Turkish president would tell U.S. and certain other nonregional countries' leaders that the problems of this region in which we live could be solved better if they would not interfere in Middle Eastern affairs.

What May Happen in Iraq

The Saddam administration is going to be destroyed somehow, or ought to be, and we ought to be able to sit at the divvying table and get our share following a war to ensure this! Therefore, we ought to take part in that war if necessary! This seems to be Mr. Ozal's logic and plan.

But in making this plan, is he thinking of what may happen if the Iraqi administration is defeated and Iraq partitioned, I wonder? I can't consider all the possibilities, but I wonder if he has added to his plan what the results would be for Turkey if, for example, a fundamentalist belt similar to Iran were to stretch along our southern borders, starting in Iran and extending to the Mediterranean via Iraq and Syria.

Shouldn't Turkey Have Middle East Plan

Turkey is a European Middle Eastern country. Turkey's Middle Eastern policies ought to be set according to regional requirements and, bearing in mind Turkey's own good, not according to the interests and suggestions of nonregional countries!

Turkey ought to be able to figure out and suggest to the whole world that the region and the whole world can have peace, regardless of what kind of order is formed in the Middle East, by considering its own and the Middle East point of view, not by looking at scenarios drawn up in countries overseas and in distant lands!

It would not be easy to set consistent policies vis-a-vis the complicated problems of the Middle East, but it is not impossible either.

To succeed at this, Turkey ought first of all to "visualize" as a plan and a purpose what kind of Middle East it wants to see and what kind of Middle East it wants to live in.

If we visualize such a blueprint in our own mind, we will be able easily and consistently to set the best policies for achieving that blueprint and purpose, that "vision," among the plethora of problems.

Middle East Isolated in World, Time

The Middle East is the world's most crucial point and the main focal point of the problems most affecting the world today.

But it seems as if the Middle East is outside this world and time.

The winds of freedom and democracy are blowing, and currents of restructuring are rushing everywhere in the world, from the Philippines to Mongolia, the Caucasus and the Balkans, from East Europe to Chile and even South Africa, but they are not even touching the Middle East; not a leaf is trembling in the Middle East.

Turkey's Place in Middle East

The only Middle Eastern and Islamic country that has adopted full secularism and is able to harmonize Islam with world change is Turkey.

Even if democracy has had a few accidents along the way and suffers a few deficiencies, the only Middle Eastern and Islamic country to have adopted democracy is also Turkey.

The only Middle Eastern and Islamic country that has been able to catch up with the times in every sense and approach the status of an industrialized country is again, Turkey.

Therefore, the winds of modernization, democratization, and secularism may be able to blow in the Middle East only with the breath that Turkey could breathe into it.

Under these circumstances, Turkey must first of all be an example inspiring trust, not by aspiring to regional leadership, and be a source of inspiration for Middle Eastern rights.

It is precisely because this is what certain outdated regimes of the Middle East most fear that they are trying to change Turkey's regime and social structure.

Need for Palestinian State

Turkey must strive for liberation from its isolation in the Middle East as regards modernism, secularism, and democracy. The establishment of a Palestinian state with geographical reality could be an important factor in Turkey's liberation from this isolation. For a Palestinian state would be the very nature and culture of the Palestinian people be a modern, secular, and democratic state.

It is because they know this, at any rate, that certain outdated regimes of certain Arab countries have been trying at least as hard as Israel to prevent a Palestinian state from becoming a reality.

Just as a modern, secular, and democratic Palestinian state would save Turkey from its isolation in the sense I mentioned in the Middle East, it would also be a safeguard for Israel and add impetus to a restructuring movement in keeping with the needs of the times throughout the Middle Eastern Arab world.

However, certain Western states prefer to keep the Palestinian cause under the rug because they cannot seem to get it through their heads that the times require restructuring, and it is better for their own narrow interests to keep the Middle East in the past.

Iraq's occupation is not the only incident of occupation in the Middle East. There are also the lands that Israel and Syria occupied long before this.

There is no excuse for rushing to comply with the UN resolutions on the invasion of Kuwait and acting as if the resolutions on the other invasions are unimportant. The United States has chief responsibility for this.

Religious Polarization May Replace Ideological Polarization

Popular movements are now widespread in the Middle East as a reaction to the virtual occupation that U.S. policy has become and to the West in general. If Turkey cannot become an effective source of inspiration, these movements may turn into a militant fundamentalism or a chauvinistic and aggressive militarism.

If these popular movements cannot be converted into a modernization and democratization movement without further loss of time and within a climate of peace, I am afraid that religious polarization may replace the ideological polarization that has now come to an end in the world, that there may be a polarization between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. And this may be much more dangerous for humanity than ideological polarization.

Turkey Must Be Agent for Change in Middle East

However, with the attitude it holds and the policy it is following in the present crisis, Turkey is rapidly distancing itself from a position in which it could positively affect change in the Middle East. While dissociating itself from popular movements beginning to simmer in the Middle East, it is identifying itself with outdated regimes that were once created to oppose it. It seems to have taken its place in the ranks of those preventing change while it could be directing the change.

If a peaceful climate based on sound foundations cannot soon be created in the Middle East, there may be quakes and eruptions to shake the whole world instead of healthy change in the region.

As I said earlier in this series, therefore, Turkey must take leadership in getting all regional countries to get rid of weapons of mass destruction under UN supervision.

"Door for Honorable Return" for Iraq

Putting the Palestine problem on the agenda in a constructive sense and launching the process of solution; devising a project to rid all regional countries, including Israel, of mass-destruction weapons; and, within the framework of such a project, getting all foreign powers committed to withdrawal from the Middle East may just open the "door for honorable return" for Iraq that former U.S. President Carter called for. The Iraqi administration would then have a chance to say to both its own people and all Arab peoples:

"I am withdrawing from Kuwait, but I am withdrawing with the guarantee of a solution to the Palestine problem and the assurance that the region will be cleared of foreign powers and will have lasting security."

There was one peaceful comment that Saddam Husayn was careful to insert among his threat-tainted declarations during our Baghdad meeting: "We would put up with a lot of self-sacrifice for the sake of peace," he said. This comment gives hope that perhaps the Saddam Husayn administration would be willing to make certain sacrifices, including withdrawal from Kuwait, for the sake of peace, but a true, dynamic, and honorable peace, not an American peace, not a "pax-Americana," not an artificial peace that would freeze the outdated structure of the region. It would suffice if some of Iraq's complaints prior to the invasion of Kuwait were taken up without prejudice!

Conclusion

A Middle East free of foreign interference...A Middle East in which democracy is widespread and the regimes and social structures modernized...And a Middle East in peace. This, in short, is what Turkey's Middle East plan, purpose, or "vision" must be! All policies that Turkey would follow within the complex of Middle Eastern problems ought to be directed to this purpose!

MOROCCO

Manufacturing to Total 40 Percent of Investment in 1990

91AA0075B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
30 Oct 90 p 10

[Dispatch from Rabat by Munsif al-Sulaymi: "Industry Accounts for 40 Percent of Total Investments in Morocco"]

[Text] Industrial investment in Morocco is expected to exceed 40 percent of aggregate investments by the end of 1990, up from no more than 39.5 percent in 1988 and 1989, according to 'Abdallah Azmani, Moroccan minister of industry and trade.

The minister told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the level of industrial investment represents 14 percent of aggregate Moroccan [national] income and employs more than 450,000 workers.

He pointed out that Moroccan industrial exports are growing at an annual rate of 25 percent and that they represent 70 percent of aggregate exports. He added that it is extremely significant that value-added industries have replaced raw materials in the field of exports.

The minister said that a significant portion of value-added products in the sectors of textiles, leather, chemicals, and foods are targeted for European markets and that they will be able to gain market share thanks to their quality and price. I consider that a good indication that the quality of Moroccan products has improved.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT learned from sources at the Moroccan ministry of industry and trade that the number of proposed industrial investment projects registered during the first half of 1990 represents a 48-percent increase from the same period a year earlier.

The sources added that those investments are capitalized at 5 billion dirhams (\$1=8 dirhams) of which fixed assets account for 50.3 percent and bank loans for 8.2 percent. Private loans and funding by the Economic Development Bank account for no more than 6.5 percent each. LISK [al-lizk] contributed 5.3 percent.

The textiles and leather sector accounts for 37.3 percent of all investments compared to no more than 22.3 percent for chemical industries.

The same sources also emphasized that the ratio of foreign investments in industry has risen substantially to 23 percent of aggregate foreign investments in Morocco amounting to a little more than a billion Moroccan dirhams. This compares with no more than 17 percent in 1989, 20 percent in 1988, and 16 percent in 1987.

European countries are the main foreign investors in the industrial sector, and especially in textiles, leathers, and chemicals. At their forefront are France, with investments of 318 million dirhams, and Spain with 310 million dirhams.

The ratio of Arab to foreign capital invested in industry has swung wildly over the past four years, amounting to 24 percent in 1987, dropping to 13 percent in 1988, and rising again to about 16 percent last year.

The Moroccan ministry of industry does not expect industrial investments in Morocco to exceed 4 billion dirhams. Ministry sources add that [proposed industrial] projects could employ upward of 22,000 workers.

IRAN

Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals Discussed*91AS0225L Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 21 Oct 90 p 3*

[Text] Political Service—With the formation of the Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals of prominent leaders of sects in the world of Islam, Muslims can join together to fight the propaganda tricks of enemies and the cultural assaults of the East and the West.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Sheikh Mohammad Va'ezzadeh-Khorasani, general secretary of the Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals, gave a press conference yesterday morning in which he announced this. He explained the goals and chief future plans of the above council and said: The council's essence is cultural and religious, and its area of activity will be all the Islamic nations.

He added: As its first priority, the council must make a policy of identifying differences arising from conflicting policies and it must seek to separate them from the main issues of Islam.

The council's general secretary discussed the shared principles in the areas of theology and the areas of dispute between sects in centuries past. He added that clearly among the Islamic sects, in view of the major shared principles, there are differences, but in essence these differences are not Islamic matters, they are in ancillary areas.

Emphasizing the intellectual and academic cooperation in the council, he discussed the improper propaganda techniques among the sects in the past, and noted that Islam is a religion based on research and subsistence and calling for thought and reason in abundance in the book of God and the Traditions of the prophet of God (peace be upon him).

The general secretary of the council added: The Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals is made of clergymen from the sects of Islam, and in the formation of a council of prominent sect leaders of the world of Islam, it will make efforts to bring the sects closer together.

Haj Sheikh Mohammad Va'ezzadeh-Khorasani discussed the course adopted by the founders of the Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals. He recalled Seyyed Jamal Asadabadi and Sheikh Mohammad 'Abduh as sounders of the call for unity.

Citing the views of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the exalted leader of the revolution with regard to reconciliation, he expressed the hope that the Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals will advance step by step with diligence in pursuit of its sacred goals.

At the end of this interview, he announced that with the appointment of the council members, which has no limitations, a general assembly will also be formed.

It is worth mentioning that on 11 October 1990 Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Haj Sheikh Mohammad Va'ezzadeh-Khorasani was appointed general secretary of the Council for Reconciliation of Sects' Goals by order of the leader of the Islamic revolution.

Census Results on Bakhtiari Tribe*91AS0225G Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Oct 90 p 2*

[Text] According to the Iranian Statistics Center, the population of the Bakhtiari tribe makes up 15.8 percent of the nation's tribal population.

According to the Public Relations Office of the Iranian Statistics Center, this census was done in Tir 1366 [22 June-22 July 1987], and it collected statistical information on the social and economic conditions of the nation's migrant tribes, especially the Bakhtiari tribe.

According to these statistics, in the year mentioned the Bakhtiari tribe had 50 clans and 4,889 "mals", which is the name of the smallest migrating unit in the Bakhtiari tribe.

This tribe, with 27,960 families and a population of 181,777 individuals, makes up 15.5 percent of the families and 15.8 percent of the individuals in the nation's migrating tribes.

In Tir 1366, 23.6 percent of all those age six and over in the Bakhtiari tribe were literate. Literacy among those six years old and older was 35.8 percent among men and 9.1 percent among women.

Among those age 10 and older in the Bakhtiari tribe, 53.1 percent of the men and 70.4 percent of the women had been married at least once.

Of the 27,960 families in the Bakhtiari tribe, 0.4 percent had motorcycles, 24.5 percent had radios, and 2.9 percent had gas stoves. The primary fuel for cooking and heating in 92.8 percent of the families was "wood and wood charcoal." In five percent of the families it was "animal fuel" and in two percent of the families it was kerosene.

In Tir 1366 there was a total of 1,633,406 head of small livestock, including sheep, lambs, goats, and kids, in the Bakhtiari tribe. Of all families, 5.3 percent were without small livestock, 52.1 percent had fewer than 50 head of small livestock, and 0.2 percent had more than 1,000 head of small livestock.

According to this census, the Bakhtiari tribe paid a total of 6,294 million rials for winter and summer encampments and travel back and forth for the families using them to feed and provide pasture for their livestock.

According to this census, Bakhtiari tribe livestock produced a total of 320,880 tons of livestock milk per year, 686 tons per year of wool, and 362 tons of goat hair.

Most Bakhtiari tribe families work at one or several handicraft industries for personal use or for sale.

In Tir 1366 carpets and rugs were being woven by 5,340 families, sack cloth (tents) was being woven by 9,293 families, and gilim—zilū [coarse flat-woven carpets] were being woven in [number missing in original text] families.

Technological Cooperation With USSR Viewed

91AS0225K Tehran KEYHAN in Persian
30 Oct 90 p 22

[Text] At a meeting yesterday morning between Palatzadeh, supervisor of the Soviet Ministry of Land Revitalization and Water Economics, and Engineer 'Abdollahi, deputy minister of water affairs for the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad, bilateral cooperation in the transfer of technology, design, and use of water resources was studied.

Palatzadeh, who was in Iran at the head of a delegation, discussed the striking increase in relations between the two neighbor countries, especially in the last year. He expressed the hope that the potential existing in the areas of academic, research, and executive cooperation on joint projects will be utilized.

Engineer 'Abdollahi, deputy minister of water affairs for the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad, with reference to the nation's Five-Year Plan and future plans to procure agricultural water, enumerated the areas of cooperation between the two countries.

According to another report, yesterday the supervisor of the Soviet Ministry of Land Revitalization and Water Economics visited the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad Water Organizations' design and research center.

In visiting this center, which is one of the nation's active and advanced centers in the area of water research, he described its activities as very advanced and of extraordinary interest. Accompanied on this visit by Engineer 'Abdollahi, deputy minister of water affairs for the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad, he also expressed the hope that bilateral cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Soviet Union in the areas of science and research would expand more than before.

Cooperation With Oman on Fishing

91AS0225H Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 22 Oct 90 p 3

[Text] Economic Service—In a meeting between Zahir al-Hina'i, Oman's Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Engineer Gholamreza Foruzesh, minister of the reconstruction jihad, ways to conduct cooperative economic relations between the two nations were discussed.

According to the Public Relations Office of the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad, at this meeting the two sides discussed fisheries, rural development, and rural industries, and studied ways to expand cooperation.

At this meeting, the minister of the reconstruction jihad discussed the achievements, activities, and position of

the Ministry of the Reconstruction Jihad in the Five-Year Plan. He stressed the long-standing relations between the two countries and announced this ministry's willingness to strengthen ties between the two countries.

Oman's minister of agriculture and fisheries also discussed the activities of this country's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in expanding relations. He announced his country's willingness to exchange delegations, especially with regard to fishing in the regional waters of Oman and rural improvement.

Mostaz'afan Foundation Stocks To Be Given to Janbazan

91AS0225I Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 23 Oct 90 p 22

[Text] Yazd—KEYHAN correspondent—The exalted leader has ordered that this year the shares of factories controlled by the Foundation for the Oppressed and the Self-Sacrificing Devotees [Mostaz'afan and Janbazan Foundation] will be turned over to war veterans 70 percent and higher in such a way that the dividends will pay their living expenses.

Engineer Zare', industrial deputy for the Foundation for the Oppressed and Self-Sacrificing Devotees, discussed the above in an interview with our correspondent. He said: Since early this year we have taken 20 new projects from the Ministry of Industries that we will carry out across the country in deprived provinces and provinces appropriate to Islamic culture. In this regard, there is the "Hejab" project to produce black chador cloth. Because Iran is the only consumer of this product and we have no domestic production in this area, we have gotten agreement to build this project in Yazd and Shahr-e Kord. If the foreign exchange is obtained to purchase the machinery, God willing the project will go into operation in the next two years.

He listed the new industrial projects of the Foundation for the Self-Sacrificing Devotees as Iran Synthetic Fibres in Molayer and Dalijan, to procure the raw materials for automobile tires, the tire manufacturing project in Ahvaz, the project to produce 10 million meters of cloth per year at Bakhtaran, the Neoprene project in Khalkhal, soft wool in Khorasan, cement in Ilam, Chalk in Afzalabad, and Kaolin in Takestan and Fagran in Esfahan. He said: To create industries, foreign exchange at government prices must certainly be used, because otherwise the initial investment is certainly not practical and less effective, but to procure raw materials preferred and even free market foreign exchange can be used.

He called for more credit availability and better encouragement for exports, and he asked the relevant officials to do some basic thinking about this so there will be more people wishing to export.

He noted concerning the investments of the Foundation for the Oppressed and the Self-Sacrificing Devotees in Yazd that revenues from the Safa'iyeh Company will be spent on industry, and that in this regard the Safa'iyeh

Crystal Factory of Yazd will be rebuilt. Noting the opening of Radio Shehab and Mehriz Valves, he announced that with the cooperation of the province industries office, we are ready to make any kind of investments in this province. In conclusion, he discussed the transfer of factory stocks owned by the Foundation for the Oppressed and Self-Sacrificing Devotees to war veterans. He said: By order of the exalted leader, this year stocks will be transferred to 70 percent and above war veterans in such a way that the dividends of these stocks will pay their living expenses and guarantee their future and make them factory owners.

Refuse-Processing Plants To Be Constructed in Cities

91AS0190F Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 6 Oct 90 p 2

[Text] Sari—KEYHAN correspondent: In the near future, nearly 30 cities in the country will have compost fertilizer factories for refuse processing.

Zargar, the deputy for coordination and developmental affairs of the Ministry of Interior, who had traveled to Sari to take part in the meeting of the municipal offices of Mazandaran, made the above announcement and added:

Of these, five factories are at the disposal of the city halls. One factory in Esfahan has become operational, and four other factories are being built in other provinces.

Pointing out that about 90 percent of the equipment for this factory can be manufactured domestically, he said: The studies for the selection of technology in 25 other cities have also been carried out, and we are trying with vast production to have the 30 above-mentioned cities own a compost factory (for changing refuse to fertilizer).

Concerning the increase in the price of land and housing in cities, he said: God willing, within the next six months, with the planning that has been done, we shall certainly control these prices. He added: There are a variety of reasons for the increase in the price of land in some cities of the country, one of which is the transfer of cash flow from the services sector to the housing sector, which has resulted in the increase in the volume of investments in the housing sector as well as the price of land.

The second part concerns some of the shortages of materials which were available in the country lately and brought the price of construction down. The third part concerns the economic situation and the economic parameters which exist in the country.

He pointed out: Next year, if approved by the government and the Majles, a special budget will be allocated for the completion of urban construction under way in 121 deprived areas of the country.

In conclusion, he added: We have proposed a plan to the Majles which will make free the import of urban service vehicles such as buses, especially in connection with public transportation.

Well-Equipped Hospital Inaugurated in Tabriz

91AS0190H Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 9 Oct 90 p 3

[Text] Tabriz—KEYHAN correspondent:

Simultaneous with the blessed birthday of the prophet (God bless him and grant him salvation) and the birthday of Imam Sadeq (peace be upon him), the Martyr Mahallati hospital of Tabriz was opened.

In the opening ceremonies, Ayatollah Malakuti, the representative of the religious guardian in Azarbaijan, the governor general of Eastern Azarbaijan, clerics, military and law enforcement commanders, and a number of released war prisoners and grand families of martyrs were present.

This hospital has 9,800 square meters under construction and has been built in five aboveground and underground stories on a 10,600-square-meter plot of land. The cost has amounted to 300 million rials in engineering, developmental, and equipment operations.

In these ceremonies, one of the officials of the fifth army of 'Ashura, which has built this hospital, by presenting a report stating that the Martyr Mahallati hospital is the most equipped hospital in the northwestern part of the country, said: A plan is underway in the area of ongoing work for the expansion and development of the hospital from 240 beds to 270 beds. He added: This hospital has six operating rooms and 10 wards, including internal medicine, ICU [intensive care unit], CCU [critical care unit], children and infants, women, general and special surgery, orthopedics, and obstetrics. Considering the centrality of Martyr Mahallati hospital in the northwestern part of the country, the development of the hospital will be carried out in two phases, with an estimated cost of 126 million tomans, for the completion of an emergency room, the building of a CATscan [Computerized Axial Tomography Scanner], pensions, nursery, stores, helicopter launching pad, and so on, in the near future.

In another part of his speech, referring to the point that what is special about this hospital is that the women's section is completely independent, he continued: From today, with 20 specialized doctors and 110 nurses, this hospital is ready to admit our martyr-nurturing nation, especially the families of the martyrs, the freed prisoners, and the beloved and brave self-sacrificers. In the next phase, we will need 10 more doctors and 120 more nurses, which we shall have through the medical science universities.

In the continuation of the ceremonies, the internal medicine, ICU, CCU, children and infants, and orthopedic wards were opened by Ayatollah Malakuti and visited by the participants.

Half of University Enrollment Consists of Women

91AS0225J Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 30 Oct 90 p 22

[Text] The Iranian delegate on the cultural and social committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations discussed the views of the Islamic Republic of Iran about ending discrimination against women. He said: More than 45 percent of all those registered at Iran's universities are women.

Gholam'ali Khoshru, Iran's delegate, who spoke at the third committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations, discussed the principles of our country's Constitution concerning the equal rights of women and men and the participation of women in cultural, economic, educational, social, and political affairs in Iran. He said:

The women of Iran today are active in all the nation's affairs. They are serving as Majles deputies and in other executive and administrative offices.

An important part of Iran's university professors and school teachers are women.

He said: In the area of higher education, in 1975 about 40 percent of all those registered at Iran's universities were women and this figure has now increased to 45 percent.

Khoshru devoted part of his speech to explaining the psychological and moral problems in the family foundations of the West. In this regard he expressed the view that the structure of society must strengthen the position of the family and family ties to create the conditions for initiative and creativity with regard to women, and it must bring about their constructive and extensive participation in the building of society.

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